

Some Criticisms of Empiricism from a Phenomeno-  
logical Standpoint, with special reference to  
the work of Husserl and Sartre

by

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FOREWORD

The standpoint from which my criticisms of empiricist philosophy are made is phenomenological, in the sense given to that word by Husserl. But it is much closer to Sartre and Merleau-Ponty than to the master. In particular, reflexive analysis in my terms concerns experience of things in the world and does not put in parenthesis the question of their existence or reality. The thesis of the world, or in Hume's terms, the natural belief in the independent existence of the world, is in my view primordial, unthinking, unreasoned, and inseparable from our being embodied subjects. The form in which I expound phenomenological doctrines is determined by the arguments of the empiricist philosophers which I have taken for discussion. It is a critique of empiricism and not of phenomenology.

Phenomenology is essentially concerned with intentionality, the relation of consciousness to whatever it is consciousness of. Perhaps the best way of understanding this is through one of the common meanings of the verb "to mean". When we see or look at anything, what we see is not just a this but a such - a house, a rainbow, a peculiar colour on a surface, and so on, and this is expressed in a word or phrase such as "the house with the green shutters", "the policeman," "that peculiar whitish colour", etc. One way of putting the point is to say that we see a universal in re. To see or look at anything is to mean it: it is the meant object, "that such-and-such." In English the verb "to mean" is commonly used in precisely this

sense. For example, I may say to a friend at a football-match, "See that man over there". He may reply, "You mean the man in the red scarf?" and I may reply, "No, I mean the one in the blue coat." The man I see is the man I mean or "intend", my seeing is my meaning or "intending" that man. The seeing is what Husserl calls the intentional act or noesis and the man in the blue coat is what he calls the intentional object or noesis. (It is not very illuminating to say, as is often said in brief accounts of intentionality, that consciousness is always consciousness of, for this is merely to say, what everyone has always known, that, for example, to see is to see something and not nothing.)

It is worth remarking that the above meaning of "meaning", which gives exactly the sense in which consciousness is said to intend an object, is lacking in French, which has to fall back on the much less satisfactory "viser", e.g., Quand j'ai une image de Pierre, c'est Pierre lui-même que je vise. The English runs: When I have an image of Peter, it is Peter himself that I mean.

There are disadvantages and dangers in talking about consciousness. The chief of them is that one may forget that all our experience is embodied experience: to see is to look with one's eyes, to touch, grasp or handle is to do so with one's hands, to speak is to voice and modulate with one's throat, tongue, teeth and lips, to have a pain is to be in pain bodily, in some part of one's body, and so on. Though Husserl recognised this, he often gives the impression of ignoring it, especially in his essentially Kantian doctrine of the transcendental consciousness and its constitution of the world. The transcendental consciousness, like Kant's transcendental unity

of apperception, tends to be a general function which belongs to no one in particular, or to everyone. Such a doctrine leads to a view of one's own body which regards it as a peculiar sort of constituted object, however different from other things, the transcendental consciousness being essentially disembodied. This is far from being my view.

Little is to be gained by trying to define consciousness or experience. The best one can do is to make one's meaning clear in particular contexts. Wherever possible, I will talk of seeing, hearing, moving, imagining, touching, and so on, that is, of the various ways in which we experience (and mean or intend) things and events and processes in the world, and, as embodied subjects, live and move and have our being. "Experience," like "perception" and "desire" and many other words is significantly ambiguous: it means either what is experienced, or the experience of it, or both together. The reason is, of course, that the subjective and the objective are inseparable and correlative. If I see a table, my seeing is not the table, but to see at all there must be something to see. I use the words "subject" and "object", "subjective" and "objective" freely, but I do not think my usage is ever ambiguous in the various contexts. I share Locke's, and Husserl's, view that to say what one wants to say effectively one must not be too "nice about terms", but just say it as well as one can.

It is impossible to discuss some important questions if one decides in advance to confine the word "meaning" to the meaning or sense of statements and other expressions, even if one takes into account the kind of context and situation in which they would commonly be used. The meaning of words and expressions are given to them; they acquire it; it is not sui generis.

It is not an unfortunate accident, as it were, that the same words are used in so many ways; that, for example, I can mean things or people, (e.g., "that man over there"), that I say what I mean, that what I say (the expression) means such-and-such, or that an expression refers by means of its meaning. It is significant that "to mean" has all these and more related meanings, and philosophically important to see how they are related. I have tried to do this in some of the later chapters.

My procedure in this study is to examine some characteristic empiricist doctrines in four representative works: Hume's "Treatise", Russell's "Analysis of Mind", Ayer's "Foundations of Empirical Knowledge", and Ryle's "Concept of Mind".

Part of my purpose is to show that in Hume's account of experience the causal or genetic account and the phenomenological or reflexive account are in conflict. Those who believe that the truly philosophical part of his work consisted of the logical analysis and reconstruction of experience, lump the causal and reflexive accounts together and dub them "psychological" for the purpose of quick dismissal. In effect, this view reduces Hume to a figure of minor historical interest, for it is evident that Hume thought he was producing a philosophical treatise on man, and the nature of knowledge, morals and human society; if Hume were merely the Carnap or Ayer of the eighteenth century surely no one would read him.

The "idea of necessary connexion", which Hume never doubted we have, often tends to be regarded as meaningless or unimportant, and Hume's analysis of causality is often taken to have shown that there is no necessary connexion

of cause and effect. This happens because the problem is taken to be that of inductive inference of a deliberate and explicit kind. Hume is concerned with that too, but he is also, and primarily, concerned with direct, unreflecting experience; he believes that the principles of induction and "philosophical probability" are only to be accounted for by pre-rational, unreasoning experience. He realises that we do not spend much of our time making inductive inferences (in any explicit sense) or even in verifying ordinary statements of fact. On the contrary we take far more for granted with complete confidence than we would ever dream of questioning, and therefore of verifying, and there is no evidence that our confidence and certainty are founded on the collection of past instances with a view to prediction. Infants are not adepts of inductive inference.

Hume's theory is meant to account for the firm and convenient certainties of daily life, and the fact that any attempt to justify, or to find rules which govern, these certainties is post facto. He is less concerned to describe the principles according to which, say, an experiment is made in a laboratory, than with why the experimenter opens the door and walks straight in without looking to see if the floor is still there; or why, for example, one jumps instantly and unthinkingly out of the way of a brick falling from a scaffold, or snatches a vase away from the edge of the table.

Hume's account of how we are thus at home in the world is a genetic account, an account of how we come to be thus at home. It is naturalistic and indeed quasi-mechanical. That is to say, it is an account founded on the same certainties which it sets out to account for; it assumes what it has to explain. His explanation of the belief in causality and of the idea

of necessary connexion is causal; the belief in causality is the effect of other processes of association. He presents, however, a different sort of doctrine in his account of the rôle of imagination, belief, and judgment in constituting identities (things and selves), in "peopling the world", and making sense of it.

Russell's "Analysis of Mind" has been subjected to severe criticism on various grounds. My reason for dealing with some aspects of it after Hume's "Treatise" is that it illustrates with unusual clarity one of the main tendencies of empiricism which is also to be found in Hume - a naturalism or scientism which includes as premises of its argument the findings of contemporary natural science. No doubt his neutral monism cannot be fully dealt with apart from an extended treatment of logical atomism. I have confined my attention, however, to his treatment of experience in terms of natural or quasi-natural events or processes, to which the account itself and its author ought to be in principle reducible. It bears a close resemblance to one side of Hume's doctrine, and its flagrant and explicit character is for my purpose its virtue.

My discussion of Ayer's "Foundations of Empirical Knowledge" is intended to show that sense-datum doctrines are secretly sensation doctrines. Whether one maintains that statements in ordinary language should be transformable into statements in the sense-datum language, or whether one says that whatever one "experiences", including hallucinations, should be analysable into sense-data makes no difference to the issue. I argue that language cannot be dissociated from actual experience, and that there is no datum of experience of the kind required for such doctrines, though it is



prima facie true that in sense-experience something is given. For further illustration of the difficulties concerning the extra-logical parts of logical constructions I take for examination a section of Nelson Goodman's "The Structure of Appearance."

Lastly, I examine some aspects of Ryle's "Concept of Mind." I try to show that explanation in terms of dispositions is causal explanation and that, though Ryle does not recognise this, it underlies his ostensibly behaviourist account of mind; that his concept of mechanism is old-fashioned and inadequate, and that his account of the criteria for saying that behaviour is intelligent tends to support a modern mechanistic theory.

I also argue that his analysis of the logical grammar of words is inseparable from the reflexive analysis of experience, that reflexive awareness is constantly taken for granted in Ryle's appeals to the reader's experience, and that this is in flat conflict with his account both of self-knowledge and of knowledge of others. Finally, I examine his account of imagination at some length, and find its essential defect to lie in the failure to push reflexive analysis further.

I have suggested that from Ryle's account of what he is doing, one might suppose he was concerned with the idioms of the English language in the same way as a philologist or grammarian, and that though he is doing more than this, he never himself makes it clear what more.

At the Colloque de Royaumont (1961), Ryle, after pointing out that philosophical "enormities" can be expressed in grammatically correct sentences in which the meaning of the words is duly respected, insisted that correctness

or incorrectness of this kind was not his concern. He went on to say that "recently the bad habit has arisen of using the term 'language', as if it were an inexhaustible source from which miraculously sprang opinions and beliefs, or thoughts, and that is of no use." (La Philosophie Analytique P.100).

But if people do this, Ryle must be held in part responsible, for in his account of sensation, for example, ostensibly the question is: "What is the right way to talk in English and what are the right English idioms?" and not: "Are there sensations of the kind sensationalist doctrines assert there are?" Ryle is in fact concerned with this last question, but one would not know this from his account of what he is doing.

My debt to Sartre and Merleau-Ponty cannot be adequately indicated in particular references, and that is why so few will be found. Their influence on my treatment of one's own body, the reflexive consciousness, spoken experience, imagination, and being in the world, is so pervasive and extensive, that I am incapable of saying where it begins or ends. This is not a study of their doctrines but a critique of empiricism in terms which, I hope, empiricists may easily understand.

In addition to the collected works of Husserl, published by Martinus Nijhoff, I have found the French translations of the "Ideen" (N.R.F.) and of the "Logische Untersuchungen" (P.U.F.) of considerable assistance. Ricoeur's notes to his translation of the "Ideen" in particular are very helpful. I have found Husserl's most interesting comments on Hume and British empiricism in the volume "Erste Philosophie (1923/24) I".



(Husserliana, Volume VII, Martinus Nijhoff). But the fundamental study of psychologism is of course in the "Logische Untersuchungen", and my treatment of naturalistic fallacies is based upon this. Lastly, I would mention C.V. Salmon's study "The Central Problem of David Hume's Philosophy" (Max Niemeyer, 1929), an offprint from Husserl's "Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung" Vol.X., which boldly attempts to disentangle Hume's account of identity from his "empiricist prejudice".

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## Chapter 1

### NATURE AND HUMAN NATURE

After Newton, natural philosophy dominated metaphysics. The world of direct experience, the lived world, came to be regarded as a collection of minor effects of the great machine upon one small but complicated part of it, the body, and apprehended by a mind which was essentially disembodied. These effects were the so-called impressions or sensations. In Locke's doctrine, the distinction was made between the mind and its materials, the ideas, and between the ideas and their "original" or source, which he assumed to be external, physical objects. These objects affect the senses and "they from external objects convey into the mind what produces there those perceptions", i.e., the ideas. ("Essay", Bk.II,I,3)

This neat scheme fell apart on one main ground: if ideas were the materials and the only materials of the mind, and if all relations including causal relations were relations between ideas, no knowledge of the original or source of these ideas was possible. For the objects of physics, anatomy and physiology could be nothing but ideas. What Locke meant here and in other contexts, though not always, by "the senses" were those objects of anatomy, the external sense organs, the nervous system and brain. And what could they be themselves but ideas?

But Locke's most far-reaching influence arose from his failure to stick to this doctrine, his failure to realise what it entailed, and his failure to realise that he had departed from it. "Sensation" often means not the process whereby an idea is produced, but the idea itself. And the idea and the sensation are frequently identified with the sensible quality of an object,

as we perceive it, for example the brown of the table top. This confusion is not due at bottom to Locke's obvious and notorious carelessness about his terms, but to his inveterate realism. The theory of representative perception suffers from the entirely unphilosophical, but fatal, flaw that no one has ever succeeded in holding it. The "holding" of the theory has generally been confined to the propounding of it. Once propounded, it is forgotten.

Locke forgets it constantly. When he speaks of a sensible object about which our senses are conversant, it is quite uncertain whether he means our complex idea or the cause of it. And it does not really matter which he means, except where he is formally propounding the distinction. Whichever he formally means, what he invariably has in mind is the sort of thing we can see and touch - a chair, a grain of wheat, a lump of gold. It is useless to ask Locke: is a chair a complex idea or its original? Officially, his answer is: the chair differs from the complex idea, which it produces by its affection of the senses, only in its lack of colour, warmth or coolness, smell and possible other simple ideas. These ideas are caused by the secondary qualities in the body, which have no resemblance to them but are defined as the power to produce them.

How could Locke have failed to see that the distinctions between the original and the idea and between primary and secondary qualities are untenable? Only by ignoring them. This seems a paradoxical thing to say, for it is obviously an essential part of his doctrine and the part which his successors fell upon. Locke ostensibly makes much of it, and when he forgets it occasionally calls himself to order and makes obeisance to it. But when, for example, Locke says, "take a grain of wheat, divide it into two parts, each part has still solidity, extension, figure, and mobility; ... and so

divide it on, till the parts become insensible; they must retain still each of them all those qualities", it is an actual, visible, tangible grain which he is obviously referring to. Is this grain, which he might hold in his hand and look at, the thing itself, or a complex idea? It could make not the slightest difference what his answer was. It makes not the slightest difference when he says "quality" where he ought to say "idea" or "sensation" where he ought to say "idea" or "quality". His incorrigible realism makes them interchangeable.

As Hume was to point out, "the philosophical system acquires all its influence on the imagination from the vulgar one." Its advantage "is its similarity to the vulgar one; by which means we can humour our reason for a moment, when it becomes troublesome and solicitous; and yet upon its least negligence or inattention, can easily return to our vulgar and natural notions." (Treatise, P. 213 and P. 216) Locke's vulgar and natural notions are everywhere evident in the text of the "Essay". But so are Hume's in the "Treatise", and his system, as we shall see, stands upon the same foundation.

The sensations in the mind, for Locke, are equivalent to knowledge of sensible qualities or to "perceptions of things" possessing these qualities.

For Locke, however, the mind was not identified with its ideas or sensations. In subsequent sensation<sup>a</sup>list doctrines it was, though imperfectly and without consistency. The term "sensation" suffered from a hopeless ambiguity, and still does. It was both a physiological occurrence and a conscious or experienced occurrence. Even when it did not mean both things at once, it passed easily and freely from the one meaning to the other.

This confusion is entirely natural, and is one of a number of related con-

fusions which are still common at the present day. Central to the confusions are the bodily sensations - pain, cold, heat, hunger, shivering, itching, tension, etc. These are felt in, or on, the body in direct experience. They are conscious experiences, i.e., we feel them, and they are bodily experiences, i.e., they are located precisely or vaguely somewhere between top and toe. When we attend to them or when they force themselves on our attention, they are experienced as the figure, but most of the time they are the background to our activities. Such sensations, however, are essentially experienced, and we can always attend to them. But the body is an object as well as a subject: I can look at my hand lying on the table beside the paper.

The confusion starts when our knowledge of anatomy or physiology is superimposed on our direct bodily experience. Human anatomy and physiology are about the body, of which one's own body is a specimen. To do anatomy and physiology is to learn about the respiratory, circulatory and digestive systems, the autonomic and central nervous systems and brain, the skeletal structure, etc. One learns that one has an oesophagus, two retinae with  $6\frac{1}{2}$  million cones each, bronchial tubes, ductless glands, etc., just as one has skin and toenails, and that electrochemical impulses are conducted by the nerves - one's own nerves, for they are in one's own body, aren't they? - and so on. It is natural to think: "All that goes on in me", for of course what one normally means by "me" is partly at least this body here, one's own body.

One thinks then of one's body in terms of anatomy, physiology, biochemistry, and even physics, and if one pleases as a system of systems of homeostatic or feedback mechanisms. It is simply a specimen of its kind. I could examine my own skin under the microscope, read my own E.E.G., just like anybody else's. Let us call the body in this sense the organism. No doubt the range

of individual variation is in some respects very wide, but any two adult male organisms of an age, for example, are closely isomorphic in structure and function.

One arrives at this view by a natural development of ordinary naive realism, according to which the body is real in the sense that it can be seen and touched, just like the table or chair. Like all such things it has an inside, and the inside is as physiology and anatomy say it is. Just as there are tables and rocks, so there are organisms.

But if one's own body is an organism, one's bodily sensations, one's bodily experience, have to be occurrences in the organism, since they are in one's body. But this is not so: no such occurrences are describable in terms of the organism. Occurrences and processes in the organism are correlated with bodily sensations, but whereas these sensations are directly experienced, the occurrences in the organism, which are of extreme complexity, can only be discovered by elaborate experiment and inference. Sensations are in the body but not in the organism. The organism is entirely an object, an object for investigation and experiment.

What is investigated, however, is not one's own body in the primary sense. What is meant by the expression "my own body" is my embodiment. Whatever else I am, I am this body, and whatever else I mean by "I" I do mean my own body, whereby I am in a place, somewhere, situated. "Here" means "where I am bodily". All my activities are conducted in or from the place where I am, and when I move, I move bodily. There is a world for me primarily because I am always bodily situated in the midst of it.

What I see is seen from where I am. I see with my eyes, I move them,



screw them up, try to see more with them. When I laugh, I laugh bodily; the laughter shakes me. When I talk, I talk with my throat, tongue, teeth and lips. When I am thinking, part of the time I am talking to myself, or making faces, or frowning, or curling my toes, or moving the pen across the paper, and these are not accessory, unconnected activities but all part of what I am at when I would say I was thinking. I am thinking bodily in a still more obvious way when I play viciously to my opponent's weak backhand on the tennis court.

Though most of the time I am taking my body for granted and paying no attention to it, having habits and skills on which I count, it takes only a moment's reflection to describe some typical aspects of bodily experience, to say roughly what it means to be embodied, and what the expression "my own body" primarily means. What it does not mean in this sense is an organism. Like all human activities, the investigation of the organism is conducted by embodied selves. Hypothesis and theory remain idle till someone confirms or fails to confirm a prediction, and this is done almost <sup>always</sup> by seeing with his eyes.

A schoolbook on elementary physiology is called "How your body works." The distinction is simply not made in popular language. But it can be made very simply with reference to this title. How my body works in one sense is how I work, for I work bodily. But a book on that would tell me little or nothing. The title, however, obviously refers to the physiological on-goings in the organism, some of which can be correlated with my bodily experience and activity, my own body.

This distinction between the body and the organism is not a distinction between two entities, nor between a physical entity and its representation "in the mind". It is a distinction between the body as self or subject, and



the body as object. The pain is in the subject but not in the object. The toothache can be in the upper jaw of the subject, the caries in a tooth on the lower jaw in the object. "Here" is where the subject is. The subject does physiology with his eyes and hands, but up to a point he can regard his own body for this purpose as an object, measure his blood-pressure, test his reflexes, and many other things, as he might another body.

The distinction is not an easy one to make, for even in direct experience the body is to some extent an object - for instance one can see a good part of it, though always more or less from the same angle, unlike the other things about it. But in any sort of action or activity it is not an object but a subject - its movements are mine. In no sense is it true to say it obeys me - I am my own body. Volitions followed by bodily happenings belong to the domain of philosophical fiction. In action, the body is experienced as my power to do this and that. Things are seen as within reach of my arm, my arm is the power to reach them.

This essential ambiguity, as Merleau-Ponty calls it, of the body, whereby it is me, my own body, a subject, on the one hand and an organism, an object, on the other, this essential ambiguity has led to endless confusion, and it is no doubt because many philosophers and others have found it intolerable that they have attempted to deny one aspect or the other. Most of them have chosen, subtly or crudely, to deny the body as subject, though in the nature of the case they could never quite succeed. To attempt this, they had to deny that experience, bodily experience, could really be as it obviously is, or attempt to maintain that it came to be as it obviously is from a genetic condition which would be consistent with their premises. This original experience was, like the state of nature, a myth. But it survives in attenuated

form into the 20th century. Why did most philosophers agree to regard the body as essentially an object, a thing in the world with all the other things? Natural philosophy, and above all Newtonian mechanics, had become the very type of genuine knowledge, of experimentally verifiable law. What other knowledge of the body could there be?

If this is the type of knowledge, my subjective bodily experience, the experience of seeing with my eyes, of walking, running, writing, reaching for, of carnal passion, can never be a matter of knowledge. Of any description of my embodiment, my bodily experience, it can be asked: How do you know this? How can this be verified? What is the proof? If knowledge is knowledge of the objective world, experimentally and publicly verifiable, there is no proof. The only evidence of seeing is to see, and the only evidence of the bodily experience of running, writing, etc. is to run, write, etc. I can improve in a literary way my description of bodily experience, make it more detailed and analytic, but to ask for verification of the kind in question is an absurdity. I can describe it carelessly. I can tell lies about it. But in the sense demanded I cannot verify it. For verification in the sense demanded always presupposes it.

Someone has to read the thermometer or the E.E.G., observe the explosion or the rat in the maze, and write down with his hand, or dictate with his tongue, teeth and lips, the results. If I ask him how he knows that what he describes did happen, his only answer can be "I saw it". I know what he means, because I know what it is to see, to see with my own eyes. My embodiment in a sense is a priori: it is a condition of the possibility of objective knowledge, of knowledge of the organism - the body as object - as much as of anything else. Reference to bodily experience is part and parcel of the common language; it

cannot be otherwise understood. It means what it does mean, because experience is as it is.

Behaviourism makes use of this common understanding of what it is to see, to be hungry, etc., but thinks to be "scientific" by never referring to it or by putting these words in quotation marks. Linguistic behaviourism in some of its forms purports to regard language solely as an autonomous domain of objective phenomena. Ryle's procedure, as I shall try to show, requires him to treat the self as another other. The problem of other selves and their embodied experience is thus dismissed: all selves are others and all others are objects. Ryle is saved in practice by his good sense, but his good sense is often at odds with what seems to be his philosophical doctrine.

In regarding the body simply as an object, philosophy was still left with the mind, and it was a disembodied mind. In earlier doctrines the soul at least inhabited or informed the body and moved it. The Cartesian doctrine of the body as a mechanism left nothing for the soul to do except think; the body would do what it did regardless, so long as it had a source of power and until the parts wore out. Descartes' physics required only configuration and motion, and his physiology was derived from his physics, but what he called the fire-element, which in its pure form was the "animal spirits", fulfilled the rôle of a source of power. Descartes' theory of soul and body is complex and difficult and it continued to develop to the end of his life. Whether one takes it to be occasionalist, epiphenomalist, or interactionist depends in part on what stage of its development is in question. There is no doubt, however, what interpretation was generally put upon the famous dualism in spite of his insistence on the quasi-substantial unity of soul and body in ordinary experience:- the body was purely a mechanism, whatever might be the

nature of the soul.

In accounting for the occurrence of the ideas, Locke takes the mechanism for granted. But just as his doctrine of representative perception is largely ignored in practice and his careful distinction of quality, sensation and idea abandoned, so his account of body and soul and consciousness is largely a straightforward, and admirable, account of ordinary experience in ordinary language, and the body in this context is certainly not a mechanism. Locke's reason for asserting the obvious with splendid vigour and wit was that it tends to be denied. Ryle at his best has the same sort of virtue.

Bodily sensations were regarded by Locke's successors as the very type of "original" sensation. Berkeley in his youth was far more of a sensationalist than Locke, and if one regards, as one may, his mature doctrine as consisting essentially in verbal legislation, remained one to the end. For the original separation of all the ideas which together we call an apple could only be deduced from the separation of the external sense organs and some physiological theory. Colours and sounds were taken by Hume to be originally "of the nature" of sensation, like bodily pain. All the observable qualities of things which in the ordinary way we see in the things were "really" or "originally" sensations. Thus all experience must consist of sensations in various relations.

The doctrine was derived from physics and physiology. But the postulated atoms, of which bodily sensations were the pure type, were asserted to be given in experience, to be our immediate objects or data, or since that might seem implausible, at least to have been so given "originally". Each of them was in itself independent of any other. But if this were so, all knowledge, all science, including physics and physiology, could be only of objects which were

ultimately reducible to sensations in various relations. Part of the time, this was Hume's view. It followed that bodily sensations were not originally experienced as bodily, for the body like all other objects was reducible to sensations. Thus was the ladder kicked away.

Hume never entirely abandoned the physiological theory and often explicitly asserts it. But he confutes the representative theory to which it naturally leads and is often essentially Berkeleian. He saw that what he called Nature could only be what he perceived, imagined and believed. But he never frees himself from the metaphysics of natural philosophy. He is Newtonian, not only in his assumptions about the world, but in his approach to that domain of Nature which is human nature, whose nature it is to apprehend Nature in a certain way. In his "official" doctrine of association, nearly all of our so-called knowledge is the mere effect of quasi-mechanical processes. "Nature, by an absolute and uncontrollable necessity has determin'd us to judge as well as to breathe and feel." (Treatise, P.183) Probable reasoning, which for Hume comprises all empirical knowledge, is "nothing but a species of sensation." (Treatise, P.103)

Hume means many things by "Nature". He thinks of Nature as essentially beneficent, ensuring our well-being as it were in spite of us. He speaks of Nature as others speak of God, and this is more than merely the eighteenth century habit of personification. Nature is Providence. But Nature is also the Nature of Newton's natural philosophy. Yet even in his strongly Newtonian introduction he writes: "All the sciences have a relation to human nature; and however wide any of them seem to run from it, they still return back by one passage or another." (Treatise, xix) But he can hardly have realised how far he would travel from his view of human nature as a part of Nature.

Nature, the natural world, he later concludes, consists of fictions of the imagination. Such are the objects of Newtonian natural philosophy then - but Hume does not say that. But the self is also a fiction, for all identities are fictions. Selves are not human nature but in a sense products or creations of human nature. They are among the constituted objects of the mind or consciousness, essentially assimilable when their identity is analysed to other fictions constituted by the imagination and belief.

All nature, natural objects, objects of natural science, were constituted in this way. It is not difficult - in retrospect - to extract a doctrine of the transcendental, constitutive consciousness from Hume, but Husserl, so far as I am aware, was the first to do so. His tendency to subjective idealism was of course recognised. But in the forefront of the picture stands his doctrine of Nature, Nature the beneficent - made like God in Hume's own image, but also Newtonian Nature with its sub-domain human nature, the impressions and ideas and the quasi-mechanical principles of association. Hume is considered, and rightly considered, the forerunner of 19th century sensationism, psychologism, positivism, and - in a different way - introspectionism. Yet his doctrine of belief, imagination, and judgement which "peoples the world" (Treatise, P.108) for all its inconsistencies and varieties of expression is distinctive and perhaps the most original thing in his whole work. The world as constituted by the imagination and belief has two intimately connected aspects: one is the system of memory and personal identity, and the other is the system of things in their causal relations. The essence of all the various fictions is identity in change. They are all ascribed to the imagination and belief. The imagination and belief, the constitutive consciousness, are not in nature, but are the correlate of nature. It is easy to go farther and say



there is a world only for a consciousness.

Hume never said anything like this, but it is hard to avoid his invitation to say it. He has little to say about the faculties, propensities, dispositions and activities which he constantly and casually attributes to the mind, even as he develops his quasi-mechanical doctrine of association. He takes the mind for granted in much the same way as he takes Newtonian nature for granted when he is talking about the impressions and treats them in the Lockean fashion as the natural effects of physical causes. He both undermines the metaphysic of natural philosophy and continues to assume it. His analysis of causality makes it meaningless to ask the cause of the occurrence of impressions and ideas, for they, and they alone, are what we call causes and effects. There is no "double existence," representing and represented. (Treatise, P.211)

Hume assigns a position of supreme importance to the science of man, "the only solid foundation for the other sciences", even as he insists that he is applying "experimental philosophy" (the method of Newton) to "moral subjects". "The essence of the mind is equally unknown with that of external bodies and it must be equally impossible to form any notion of its powers and qualities otherwise than by careful and exact experiments, and the observation of those particular effects, which result from its different circumstances and situations." (Treatise, P.xx-xxi)

This could be a programme for experimental psychology, for human as a branch of animal psychology, and Hume's short chapter "Of the reason of animals" is in keeping with this view. But then there would be no ground at all for regarding the science of man as the only solid foundation for the other sciences. It would simply be one science among others. Whatever sense one gives to the

word "foundation" the relation of psychology and the social sciences to physics and chemistry cannot be so described. The problem of knowledge and of the relation of consciousness to its objects would remain untouched if the science of man were a science like any other science. Every psychology, however, leads to the problem of consciousness and thus beyond itself. Rats or other creatures may be described entirely in terms of their movements, however artificially, but unless I observe them and note what happens no experiment has been made. It is only because I believe that others actually see (are conscious) too that I accept numerous experimental findings which I have not myself made. The seeing or observing is not part of the experimental finding: only what is seen and observed is that. The seeing or observing are subjective: what is seen or observed is objective. But without seeing, nothing would be seen, no observation would be made, and no hypothesis tested.



Chapter 2

IMPRESSIONS AND IDEAS

Hume's emphasis on experiment means that he is going to stick to the evidence and not to go beyond it. He will not impose "conjectures and hypotheses on the world for the most certain principles." (Treatise P.xxii) It is because the doctrine of impressions and ideas is not regarded as a hypothesis but self-evident, that it is never fully formulated and always remains radically obscure and ambiguous. For the sensation doctrine, as we shall see, is not its only source. No less important for his doctrine of complex impressions and ideas is the mental image which is "in the mind" but not in the world and to which the complex impression is also assimilated as an "internal and perishing existence." (Treatise, P.194) The mental image is hypostatized, as it so often is, as an intra-mental entity, and the complex impression is simply the more forceful and vivacious original of it, but nonetheless an intra-mental entity itself. This is what Sartre calls the illusion of immanence, the belief that the objects of consciousness are in consciousness, in the mind, as if the mind were a container. The use of the word "contents" in this connection probably derives from it.

The simple impressions of sensation, though they have a curious bearing on Hume's doctrine of mathematics and crop up from time to time in other contexts, may be largely neglected for my purpose. But they are important in one respect. They are simples, without parts, extensionless, or in other terms minima sensibilia. All complexes are mere sums of simples: a whole is the sum and nothing but the sum of its parts. In any given complex, the

simples are finite in number. Divisibility is not infinite. It follows that any impression or idea is determinate in quantity as well as quality, since it consists of a definite number of simples. The only importance this doctrine has is that, though Hume perfectly well recognises that determination of quantity is not accomplished by counting the simples but by measurement according to a practical standard, he continues to assume that ideas or mental images, no less than the impressions of which they are copies, have a definite size. What he does not realise is that neither impressions nor ideas as such can be measured at all, and that it is absurd to assert that they are determinate in quantity if the quantity is in principle indeterminable. The height of a man can be measured but not the height of the mental image of the man, though the image be of a man of that height.

There is a further complication in the doctrine of impressions which is closely connected with the hypostatisation of the image. Though Hume frequently identifies impressions with qualities or properties of things in the same way as Locke and Berkeley - colour, taste, smell, texture, visual and tactual shape - he is also convinced for much the same physiological reasons as Berkeley that "our sight informs us not of outness", i.e., that any visual impression is in two dimensions, or at least "originally" in two dimensions. (Treatise, P.191) It is a flat patchwork of colours. Hence that impression which would correspond, for example, to the appearance of the side of a house in the field of vision is held to be determinate in size. This view leads to what I shall call the illusion of real appearances. For any appearance of the house is simply the way it there looks to me here, the way I see it. But Hume's doctrine of the visual impression hypostatizes the look of the house and holds that this is determinate in quantity or size. But, as I shall argue, only the house can be measured in any way and only it can be said to be of

determinate size in any dimension.

Hume's theory of impressions and ideas is not like some sense-datum theories which purport to be just another way of talking about what in the ordinary way we say we see or hear or feel, and which are to be justified simply by their convenience, utility and unambiguousness. For Hume, we believe we see things, bodies, material existents. But these are not what is given. We take our perceptions to be our only objects, "and suppose, that the very being, which is intimately present to the mind, is the real body or material existence." (Treatise, P.206) The bodies and the impressions are the same: the bodies are simply what we believe the impressions to be, but there is nothing but the impressions.

Yet Hume maintains paradoxically that "all sensations are felt by the mind, such as they really are, and that when we doubt, whether they present themselves as distinct objects, or as mere impressions, the difficulty is not concerning their nature, but concerning their relations and situation." (Treatise, P.189)

I say "paradoxically" for we obviously do not feel them as they really are - we take them for bodies. Again Hume states: "For since all actions and sensations of the mind are known to us by consciousness, they must necessarily appear in every particular what they are, and be what they appear. Every thing that enters the mind, being in reality a perception, 'tis impossible anything should to feeling appear different. This were to suppose, that even where we are most intimately conscious, we might be mistaken." (Treatise, P.190)

The common injunction not to take Hume too literally is a bad one. It

is not his expression but his doctrine that is difficult. In these passages, the difficulty is of a fundamental nature. If sensations were felt as they really are, how would the vulgar ever take them for external bodies? By reason of "their relations and situation." Sensations are what they are and what they appear, irrespective of their relations to other sensations. Relations are purely external. But the vulgar are not conscious of some of their sensations as such; they suppose them to be bodies, and in this they are, in a sense, mistaken. The sensations as they really are are "known to us by consciousness." Consciousness in this context must, I think, be the reflexive consciousness, and Hume seems to be asserting in Cartesian fashion that it is certain and indubitable.

What Hume is doing is alleging the evidence of our direct, intimate consciousness in favour of his doctrine of impressions and ideas. He identifies the sensation with what the vulgar take to be the objectively real qualities of bodies or material existents. Whereas, as he alleges, the vulgar take their perceptions to be their only objects, he takes what, for example, the vulgar call the colour of a thing to be a sensation of which we are most intimately conscious and about which we cannot be mistaken. Such a sensation is what it is and what it appears to be. It is a determinate colour, and it is nothing but a colour. It is a pure quality and it is presented as such, irrespective of its relations. Where does he get these pure sensations or qualities? They are simply the abstracted qualities of things. Anything may be analysed without remainder into its qualities. These abstracted qualities he identifies with what he insists are the presented or felt sensations, of which we are most intimately conscious and about which we cannot be mistaken. The problem then concerns their relations and situation, that is, how these qualities or sensations

are supposed jointly to compose a body or material existence.

The doctrine of impressions and ideas can only be understood historically as the late and sophisticated product of two centuries of physical, physiological and philosophical theory. To cite the evidence of our intimate consciousness is pure sleight of hand. What we are alleged to be intimately conscious of is actually deduced from this elaborate body of theory. It is perhaps unduly to rationalise Hume's position to say that he persuaded himself that what must, according to the theory, be presented to consciousness, was presented to consciousness. The difficulty was that the vulgar did not know it: they thought their sensations were qualities of bodies - the grass was green, the sky was blue, the sack heavy, the ditch foul-smelling.

This being so, Hume, try as he might to stick to the direct evidence, had to fall back on the scientific premises of the doctrine, though without always realising what he was doing. He had to say that "colours, sounds, etc., are originally on the same footing with the pain that arises from steel, and pleasure that proceeds from a fire", (Treatise, P.192) where the meaning of "originally" is clearly "when we first have them." The evidence for this could not be direct. It could only be in terms of the theory from which the doctrine originated.

But the physical theory took the physical world for granted, and it was the belief in the independent existence of body, of the physical world, which Hume undertook to account for on the basis of the alleged data. Not only were the data deduced from the physical theory; they were no longer data, for what the vulgar saw was not, for example, the pure quality red, but red in a perceptual context, for example, an attractive shiny red surface over there and out there. For Hume, there was the pure quality red; the "shininess" would have to be

analysed as streaks of white as if what was presented were a painting; and the attractiveness was a sensation of pleasure caused by the impression of sensation and projected upon it. There would be absolutely no intrinsic connection between the red and the white and the pleasure as they might be supposed to have occurred separately, originally. Hume's theory was to account for experience as we actually have it, for, that is, the vulgar consciousness, on the premise that what was given were sensations.

It followed from the doctrine of impressions or sensations that the senses were the faculty of receiving, or apprehending, or just having sensations, nothing else and nothing more. This concept of the senses is no less far removed from actual experience than is the concept of a sensation, of which it is the strict correlative. Our actual sense experience consists not simply of passive bodily sensations, but of looking, listening, touching, handling. The pure sensing of the sensations is at best a hypothesis, but there is no evidence for it in experience; the "evidence" is that of the external sense organs which receive and transmit impressions, according to the then theory. Whenever Hume wants to appeal in a concrete way to the reader's experience it is never to his experience of impressions and ideas as such that he appeals, for obvious reasons. And when Hume introduces the distinction between impressions and ideas, in order to say what he means at all, he has in effect to treat impressions as identical with material existences, independently existing, or with observable qualities of such things. He thus puts the alleged vulgar belief in reverse: the vulgar take their perceptions to be their only objects; Hume takes the objects to be his perceptions.

We will "readily perceive" the difference between the impression and the idea, he confidently asserts. We do readily perceive it because the distinction



he makes is that between seeing and imagining material existences. "When I shut my eyes and think of my chamber, the ideas I form are exact representations of the impressions I felt; nor is there any circumstance of the one, which is not<sup>to</sup> be found in the other." "I can imagine to myself such a city as the New Jerusalem,... tho' I never saw any such. I have seen Paris; but shall I affirm I can form such an idea of that city, as will perfectly represent all its streets and houses in their real and just proportions?" (Treatise, P.3)

Chapter 3

SEEING AND IMAGINING

If we did not see things and imagine things we would never know what Hume meant by his distinction between an impression and an idea. But in a sense we still do not know - we know what the distinction corresponds to but we do not know what is meant by an impression or an idea. The only way to show that we have impressions and ideas, or that there are impressions and ideas, would be to start from the vulgar consciousness and indicate that feature or element of what we experience which would be called an impression or idea. Any fruitful analysis of sense experience should start from sense experience, not from physics or physiology or what else we have learned about the world by means of sense-experience, nor from the observed behaviour of rats or monkeys or infants. Actual sense experience as we have it could never be deduced from any such evidence - all such evidence presupposes and depends upon our own sense-experience. To say this is also to say that the attempt to identify pure data, the immediate data of consciousness, is futile and nugatory. If there were a pure datum of consciousness we would be conscious of it: it would be actually given to consciousness. All alleged data prove to be merely identifiable elements or features or characteristics of things, products of analysis.

The method I shall use is that of reflexive analysis. Any description of experience, and not merely of what we experience, is reflexive. A description of a table would not be a description of experience; but a description of seeing a table would be. In other words, such a description would not merely describe something, an object, in the world, but the way in which one is conscious of it.



Seeing, for example, is not reducible to what is seen, though it is inseparable from it. It is the subjective correlate of what is visible. But for reflexion I could not meaningfully say that I see anything. Reflexion is commonplace and indispensable, and any kind of waking consciousness or experience may become reflexive. (I am inclined to think that to reflect while dreaming is to wake up.) What is frequently meant by "consciousness" is the reflexive consciousness, and this is one reason why the term is so ambiguous - though not nearly so ambiguous as "unconscious". But consciousness or experience need not be reflexive. I can be absorbed in a task and all my attention can be devoted to what I am at. I am of course seeing what is before me all the time, but it is it and not the seeing that occupies me. But my seeing it is implicit in its visibility, its being seen, and I can make this explicit and be aware of seeing it. It is not the seeing alone that I am aware of in reflexion, for there is no seeing without something seen. What I am reflexively aware of is my seeing something.

Phenomenology is reflexive description and analysis. It is not description and analysis of any objective aspect of the world, but of our experience of the world. No general account of phenomenological analysis can do more than provide preliminary orientation. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. One word about the "epoche", the putting in parentheses of the natural attitude and the natural thesis of the world, the assumption that there is a world, Hume's natural belief. This attitude or thesis is not suspended, for it cannot be suspended. But it is itself analysed reflexively. As I shall show, the analysis of seeing and imagining cannot be made except in relation to the natural thesis of the world, nor could any distinction be established between seeing and imagining. Sense experience is inseparable from the natural thesis of the world,

Hume's vulgar consciousness. There is no other sort of sense experience than that of the vulgar consciousness.

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Sense experience is experience of things in the world, one world, by different senses. We do not construct one object or one world out of correlated data supplied by different senses. Our experience is of touching, seeing and smelling the very table which we see; the same table is touched, seen and smelt. The vulgar consciousness or the natural attitude are not only vulgar and natural but provide, overtly or covertly, the basis for all arguments which criticise them or hold them to be in any sense unwarranted. It is not possible not to believe in the visible, tangible, spatio-temporal world. Evidence is of this or that, what is or is not the case, what there is and what there is not, but the thesis of the world is independent of any particular fact or any particular existent - it is in the world that what is or is not the case is as-  
4. certain. That any fact can be found out and established presupposes a world.

To attempt to make the distinction between seeing and imagining without reference to things in the world is impossible. To attempt this is to attempt to analyse experience while trying to ignore actual experience. That is why the only feasible sense-datum theory would be simply another way of talking about things in the world, except that one could not talk, as Ayer virtually shows in "The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge".

Hume's distinction between impressions and ideas is made in terms of their force and vivacity. If an idea were forceful and vivacious enough it would be an impression. (Hume's mechanism of sympathy depends upon this principle whereby an idea can actually become an impression.) He illustrates the difference by means of the difference between seeing and imagining his chamber. But the

difference does not lie in the force or vivacity of the chamber, which may be brightly or dimly lit, smoky or clear. Furthermore we can see it unobservantly, abstractedly, without taking any special notice of it, and we can imagine it vividly and in detail. But to imagine it vividly is not to see it, and to see it apathetically is not to imagine it.

The chamber being granted, however, the distinction is easy to make. We can only see it or any part of it when we are bodily in it and looking with our eyes open. We can, if we will, examine it in more and more detail, discovering more and more. It is revealed; we do not invent it. We need not wonder what some detail is like: we look and it is revealed in its unpredictable particularity. When we imagine it, we do not need to be bodily in it, and if we are, it is easier to imagine it with the eyes shut. We can never discover anything about the chamber this way, though we may try to remember more detail. There is a limit to what we can imagine with any confidence that we are imagining it as it is, i.e., as we would see it to be if we were actually in it and looking round it. We can at will imagine it as other than it is, and cannot be certain that some particulars we imagine are such as it really has. If someone asks us questions of detail about it, there are some we cannot answer. We can always give an answer, but it can be wrong. The only way to know is to go to the chamber and look.

To make this distinction with reference to the chamber is to make it in the only possible way. In the natural attitude there is a world of visible, tangible things which we can and do see and touch directly. We are in the midst of it, wherever we happen to be, being ourselves embodied, and we see what we see from where we are with our eyes. To see is to have direct access to the things in the world, to find what is there and not invent it. It is all there

already even when we can't make out what we want to make out, when we can't see it properly. We know what to do when we can't see anything properly - get close enough; then if the light is good enough we'll see it; or if not, we can try to touch it, feel what it is like. Some things we see will not yield to this treatment: we cannot see more of a rainbow or mirage by getting closer. We can see where the rainbow ends, but only from another place, not from where it ends. Even so, we have discovered something about the world - that is the way rainbows are, and how else should we discover this but by seeing, by going and looking?

The things that we have got to know by seeing how they are, we can imagine as we saw them, but we can also imagine them as other than we saw them, as changed. And we can never be certain that they were as we now imagine them, nor that they are now as they were when we saw them: to know that, we would have to see the things themselves again. But if they are still there at all, they are as they are, there to be looked at, if we could get within sight of them, and if they are not there at all now, there will be something else there anyway. By the thesis of the world, we are where we are in it and can only see so much from where we are, but imagine whatever we please. Without positing things in the world, no distinction can be made, for to see something is to see something which is there to be seen, visible. The seeing and the thing itself are inseparable. This point is often made about the primary meaning of the verb to see. One cannot be said literally to see something which does not exist and which is not there within one's range of vision.

When we imagine something we may posit it as existing elsewhere, as absent, as not existing at all, or as "neutral" when we do not posit it either as existing or as not existing. (Cf. Sartre: *L'Imaginaire*, P.35) In any case

it is not bodily, visibly, tangibly present, to be explored and discovered and examined. Imagining is a way of making quasi-present what is posited as being absent. One of the difficulties about Hume's analysis of this in terms of natural belief is that though it covers the case of imagining something which we posit as existing elsewhere in the world, it does not cover the case of imagining, say, a purely imaginary building, which is yet imagined as a building - an object of belief and not simply a complex idea.

Leave the actual things in the world out of account, and this whole distinction between seeing and imagining collapses. But Hume's distinction between impressions and ideas depends entirely on this familiar distinction. There have to be things, real things, in order to make it. But what we call a thing independently existing is not simply a complex impression or idea, for these are "internal and perishing existences" as he later calls them. They are "in the soul", not in the world. It is for this reason that Hume does not elaborate the distinction between seeing his chamber and imagining it, for though his distinction is entirely parasitic on this one, he does not mean to bring the chamber into it at all. Hence his distinction between the impressions and ideas in terms of the vague and unsatisfactory force and vivacity. The chamber is an identity and all identities are fictions based upon our "broken" but resembling perceptions. The distinction between the impressions and ideas is supposed to be made independently of the fictions, for it forms an essential part of his account of the creation of the fictions.

Hume never gives examples of impressions or ideas as such. Not only in the early sections but throughout the book, all his examples are of things in the world - mountains, houses, trees, his chamber, table, books. He has no

choice, for to speak meaningfully he must speak of the things which we see or imagine. But when he speaks of impressions and ideas without giving any examples, then they are not things in the world. Nor are they always merely intra-mental objects - they are often both objects and the consciousness of them. This ambiguity is inherent in his use of the term "perception" which can mean the perceiving or the perceived or both at once. In the last case, the consciousness of the object and the object of consciousness are identified. This is one of the sources of the illusion of real appearances and of the hypostatized image.

Chapter 4

THE ILLUSION OF IMMANENCE \*

What leads Hume to treat impressions and ideas as things when he is giving illustrations but as internal and perishing existences when he is not? Both impressions and ideas are called perceptions and there is no hard and fast distinction between them. An idea corresponds to what is now called a mental image. It is easy to regard a mental image as some sort of entity. But it obviously is not in the world like a table or a chair or even a mirage or a rainbow. It is spatial if it is visual, but it isn't one of the things in the common space, spatially related to all the other things in the world. It is not situated anywhere. But it is an image, isn't it? It must be somewhere, musn't it? But not in the world. In the mind? Well, the mind is not of course a place, but there are minds, aren't there? So it must be in the mind, an intra-mental object, an internal and perishing existence.

Images come and go, the argument might continue, and when they go they are no more, they do not exist. They are exactly as they appear - there is no more to them than appears, than we are aware of. We are aware of a mental image or there is no mental image, and we are entirely aware of all of it. Hume partly recognised this essential point, which others have sometimes failed to recognise - there is no more to the image than one actually imagines. One can go on describing what it is of and imagining more and more of that -

\* This chapter is based upon the analysis in the first part of "L'Imaginaire" which Sartre optimistically calls "Le Certain".



the characteristics of the thing - and a natural illusion for those who regard an image as a picture is to suppose that it is the image they are describing, and that there is more in it than they happen to notice at any time. But "in" the image there is nothing that one is not, as it were, noticing. How could there be? It would literally be a thing or a picture then; one would be seeing it.

We cannot be mistaken about anything in it, for "this were to suppose that even where we are most intimately conscious, we might be mistaken". We can make mistakes about things; we cannot make mistakes about mental images - they are, one might think, exactly as they appear. But they are very like what we see. They can be quite detailed. Exact copies, one might say. But fainter, sketchier. Hence, they differ only in force and vivacity, "not in nature". And as an idea or mental image is an object, but only an intramental object, an internal and perishing existence, so is an impression: it is just more forceful and vivacious.

When Hume speaks of them as objects, though he uses the word in more than one sense, he is not necessarily confusing them with things in the world (objects of belief), for he does indeed regard them as the immediate given objects of consciousness, and in a sense the only objects, which, however, we take to be external, continuing existences, things in the world. But it is not only by reason of the language that, in giving examples, he has to refer to things in the world. The fundamental reason is that an idea or image is always an idea or image of something, whether the something actually exists or does not exist, whether it is a fiction or a mere possibility or a reality. That is why he has to talk the way he does about ideas of such-and-such.

"I have seen Paris; but shall I affirm I can form such an idea of that city, as will perfectly represent all its streets and houses in their real and just proportions?" (Treatise, P.3) Hume is here talking in the natural way, according to the thesis of the world, describing what it is to see and what to imagine Paris. But on his view of impressions and ideas he has no right to be doing this, for an impression simply is what it is and what it appears to be, and so is an idea; they are objects in the mind, not in the world. In what sense could they be of anything? They would have to be representations of it, and this Hume emphatically rejects; there is no double existence, representing and represented.

And Hume himself is perfectly well aware that on his theory there is strictly no sense in which an impression or idea can be of anything. He does not realise that by the same token an idea could not be an idea of an impression and one could never know that ideas were copies of impressions. For one could never remember impressions as such but only have present ideas "of memory". "Of memory" would simply mean "more forceful than other ideas". But he knows that an impression or idea cannot strictly be of anything. Hence "to form the idea of an object, and to form an idea simply is the same thing; the reference of the idea to an object being an extraneous denomination, of which in itself it bears no mark or character." (Treatise, P.20) It is like a picture of a landscape, which is just a patchwork of colours on canvas. His account of the "idea of existence" follows accordingly: "

"There is no impression or idea of any kind, of which we have any consciousness or memory, that is not conceived as existent; and 'tis evident, that from this consciousness the most perfect idea and assurance of being is derived.... The idea of existence, then, is the very same with the idea of what

we conceive to be existent. To reflect on anything simply, and to reflect on it as existent, are nothing different from each other. That idea, when conjoined with the idea of an object, makes no addition to it. Whatever we conceive, we conceive to be existent. Any idea we please to form is the idea of a being; and the idea of a being is any idea we please to form." (Treatise, pp.66-7).

What exists is impressions and ideas and nothing else. The idea of an object and the idea as an object - the idea-object - are the same thing: the idea is itself the object and the only object. That is the theory which all his examples confound.

The things in the world, his chamber, mountains, trees, the buildings and streets of Paris, all that in the ordinary way we say exists, are objects of belief, i.e., ideas enlivened by belief or assent. But all ideas in Hume's terms exist, and it is not in point of existence that one idea differs from another. His problem remains unsolved: how we can have an image of anything when the image is it. What I image has its place in the world; it is not my image, though I believe it exists; my image is of it, or in other words, I am imaging it. Not for a moment do I take my image of the Pan-Am building for the Pan-Am building. But that is certainly what I am imaging; I mean that very building in New York; it is of it that I have an image. It does not help Hume in the slightest to say that the reference of an idea to an object is an extraneous denomination; no such reference would be possible on his theory. On his theory, you could not imagine the buildings of Paris, for your present lively ideas, enlivened by belief, would be the buildings of Paris. Your enlivened image would be not of them, but them. But the evidence of reflexion is decisive: when I image the streets of Paris, and when I

imagine myself there, the thesis of the world is effective, and what I mean is that very city 4000 miles away, not my image. The image is not an entity. When I (here) imagine Paris (there), I am said to be having an image, but this is only one way of talking. If an image were a picture it could be looked at, but one can never look at it; all one can do is to imagine more.

Hume's doctrine of impressions and ideas has its source in the theory of sensation. "'Tis certain, that the mind, in its perceptions, must begin somewhere; and that since the impressions precede their correspondent ideas, there must be some impressions, which without any introduction make their appearance in the soul. As they depend upon natural and physical causes, the examination of them wou'd lead me too far from my present subject, into the sciences of anatomy and natural philosophy." (Treatise, P.275) The complex impression "as it makes its appearance in the soul" is assimilated to the mental image; it is simply more forceful and vivid. If one regards the mental image as an intra-mental entity or object, it is easy to regard what it is of as being that which it resembles, of which it is a copy, and hence to regard this original as being also an intra-mental entity, an internal and perishing existence. An impression then is just a lively mental image.

The ordinary distinction between seeing (or touching or hearing) and imagining, according to which an identical object can be seen or imagined, is a distinction between two types of consciousness of an object, two ways of "intending" it, of having it in mind. Hume, however, puts the distinction into the substitute intra-mental objects. I can see St. Paul's or I can imagine St. Paul's. For Hume, in the first case there is a lively object, and in the second case a less lively one which is like it. (How it could be

known to be like it, Hume never explains.) There are two objects, not one: what is called seeing goes into the one, and what is called imaging or imagining goes into the other. But though Hume in this way identifies the object of consciousness and the consciousness of the object, as the very word "perception" in his usage implies, he also retains a mind or consciousness which is not identified with the object, and in terms of which the distinction between seeing and imagining is also made. He has thus two parallel distinctions: (a) in terms of the force and vivacity of the object, and (b) in terms of the liveliness with which we apprehend it, the manner of our apprehension. (Treatise, P.96)

Hume, as I have said, takes the mind for granted, even when he is reducing personal identity to "nothing but a bundle or collection of different perceptions". The propensities, dispositions, activities, and operations of the mind are repeatedly invoked. How these are to be reconciled with the quasi-mechanical principles of association, whereby Hume attempts to account for as much of experience as he possibly can, is nowhere explained. Where the principles of association are employed, the mind - if there were a mind - would be a purely passive, receptive, contemplative consciousness. Even the passions - the impressions of reflexion - when regarded from this point of view would occur to an essentially unmoved, unimpassioned consciousness. But it is evident that Hume does not always conceive the mind in this way. It has "command over all its ideas", (Treatise, P.624) it is enlivened by an impression and "enlivens" an idea. And identity is the product of the imagination. But Hume expounds no theory of the mind or consciousness, but only of the intramental objects and the objects of belief, the fictitious identities of the imagination.

This is one of the most important sources of ambiguity in Hume's theory; the object of consciousness and the consciousness of the object are identified in the perception, but there is still a mind or consciousness left over of which the perception is an object. It is entirely uncertain whether Hume recognised any distinction between a lively idea and the lively apprehension of an idea. At any rate, he treats them as interchangeable and this is perfectly natural. To apprehend something in a lively manner is to apprehend something lively. The intentional act or noesis and the intentional object or noema correspond. But Hume never actually makes this point, and it would be far-fetched to extract a doctrine of intentionality from his work. It would be completely at odds with his doctrine of impressions and ideas and the principles of association, and with his view of the mental image as an entity or intra-mental object, a sort of picture having no essential relations to whatever it might be thought to picture.

Hume's description of any idea or image is in effect a description of a thing in the world, which he assumes in the common sense way to be fully determinate, and just<sup>as</sup> the thing can be reduced to the sum of its abstracted qualities and dimensions, so also can the image - it is nothing but its "pure" qualities and these are the immediate data of consciousness. One cannot be in error about these - they are entirely as they appear. He never ceases to identify the determinate, objective qualities of things with what is immediately given in direct experience, for the things in the world, the fictions, are entirely reducible to the immediate data.

Some qualities, such as visible shape and colour, which are obviously not the same quality, raise a serious problem for Hume, for they cannot be regarded as separate impressions. Flying in the face of his distinction



between them, he insists that what is not separable is not distinguishable, and then goes on to show that it is - by means of comparison of things alike in colour but not in shape or alike in shape but not in colour. He simply contradicts himself, for what is not separable in this case, quite plainly is distinguishable. Why does he insist again and again that what is not separable is not distinguishable? He identifies what is given with the qualities of things in the world, regardless of the fact that these different qualities are singled out or abstracted in predication and are not given, each of them, so to speak, on its own on a plate. Two of these qualities are obviously shape and colour, but no less obviously there can be no impression of uncoloured shape nor of unshaped colour. So there cannot be any distinction.

But there is. Having denied it, he has to make it. (Treatise, P.25) Hume would never land himself in such a position if he did not have to. He had to do so, because he always assumed with Berkeley that what was given were the qualities of things, and these he identified with the impressions. But, if I may repeat the point yet again, whenever he takes an example of an impression or idea or describes one, it is a thing he refers to and describes. But sometimes he also means an appearance of a thing, and of this I shall have more to say, for as I shall show it is far more plausible in some respects to identify the mental image as a copy of an appearance of a thing, than as a copy of a thing.

But first, the mental image itself, which is his fundamental model. It is regarded as an intra-mental object. But if one asks how one mental image is distinguished from another or how it is identified, the answer has to be in terms of what it is of. This applies no less to the purely imaginary than to images of existing things or people. The distinction between an image



of Lyndon B. Johnson and an image of Dean Rusk is the distinction between L.B.J. and Dean Rusk. If one asks how high an image of L.B.J. is, there is no answer, for it is only things in the common space that have a measurable and determinable height, breadth or depth. An image of L.B.J. is "spatial", but it has no height for it is not in space. The space is a quasi-space and the height a quasi-height. So also for the temporal characteristic. An image of L.B.J. at the Democratic Convention last August is not last August, nor is a bodily image of the heat in the hall. The time of the image is a quasi-time. The questions "when?", "where?", "how tall?" and so on can only be asked of what the image is of. There is no difficulty in saying or guessing the dimensions and the date of what I am imaging - these are the date and dimensions, which one may read about in the newspapers. I may get the date wrong or the dimensions wrong, but for them to be wrong there must be the correct date and dimensions. But the image has none - it is "quasi-" through and through. One cannot be wrong or right about its dimensions. To image a small thing and image a huge thing is not to have a small image and a huge image. The difference is in the things. The image, as Sartre says, is a consciousness of..., an imaging, an imaging consciousness, and since it is just an imaging there is nothing "in" the image but what one actually images. Hence it cannot be examined and scrutinised as a picture can be, for there is nothing to scrutinise or examine.

One cannot ask how distant the image is; for there is no answer to the question "distant from what?" In an image of someone at a distance the distance is imaged like everything else; one can have an image of L.B.J. at 50 yards, but not an image at 50 yards of L.B.J. If it is an image of a picture of L.B.J., it is an image of a picture at six feet, for example, not

an image at six feet of a picture, not a picture of a picture. It is of course partly because pictures, which are things, are also usually of things, that mental images are regarded as a kind of picture: to image something is to picture it, to quasi-see it. And indeed the fact that pictures, sculptures and models are of things probably underlies all doctrines which make the object of consciousness a representation of something, including of course the doctrine of representative perception.

The only reason for making a distinction between imaging and imagining in this context is that one can image, for example, someone's face nowhere in particular, at no particular distance and in no particular situation, but one can also imagine him sitting in a chair across the room talking and oneself sitting at a certain distance from him. That is to say one imagines a situation with oneself in it looking at someone else. In making up a story, one imagines also the situation in a wider sense-the scene imaged gets its significance from this. In imaging someone at some distance, the imagined situation generally includes oneself, the imaged "over there" is in relation to the imagined "here". One imagines oneself bodily in a certain situation, though as in seeing something from a certain position, the consciousness of one's own body is implicit, or non-thetic. (cf. *L'Imaginaire*, P.23)

Imagining a situation and imagining that something is the case can amount to the same thing. "Imagining" of course has other meanings too; it can, for example, mean "believing falsely". But that does not really affect this analysis.

One need not, however, imagine any situation or context or place in order to image someone or something, or to image a smell or taste or "feel" or a bodily sensation. One can image someone's expression without imaging any

feature of his face clearly: one may be quite unable to recall the colour of his eyes, for example, or what his teeth are like though one is imaging him with a broad grin. Mental images are not "determinate in quality and quantity." Furthermore, vividness may be entirely independent of detail, being essentially affective, as I shall try to show at a later stage.

Whether one is seeing L.B.J. or imaging L.B.J., it is the same man that one is seeing or imagining. If it were any sort of simulacrum or picture that one had before one in imaging, how would one know it was a simulacrum or of whom it was a simulacrum? To know this one would have to remember the original and to remember the original would be just to have that or another simulacrum. This is essentially the difficulty that Hume is in when he asserts that ideas are copies of impressions. The answer to the question "what are you imagining?" or "what is your image of?" is not simply determined by the form of the question. If one is imaging a certain person it could not be anyone or anything but that very person one is imaging. Only the view of the image as a mental occurrence, a mental picture or scene on the stage of one's inner theatre which one introspects could have led people to suppose otherwise. One means the very person one images, and that person is certainly not in person on any stage "in one's mind". That person may not be where one imagines him and of course, in the case of a memory image, not at the time one imagines him. He may be dead though one imagines him alive or as he was when alive. But the image is not an occurrence independent of the meant identity, the object or person, which is imaged. That is Hume's theory, and later Russell's theory; the identity is a construction out of intra-mental occurrences.

Reflexion refutes this view: imaging presupposes the identity of the thing

or person imaged. The positing of the object as existing elsewhere, as absent, as no longer existing, as non-existent, as possible or "neutral" is essential. To image a dragon, to imagine a situation that might have been but was not, or is not yet but may be, is to posit them as non-existent or not having been or yet to be. That is to say, one assumes the world in which some things are and some things aren't, some things and events have been, have happened, and some things haven't. One's true beliefs and one's false beliefs equally presuppose the world, which is as it is, independently of what one believes. The thesis of the world is that the world is as one knows it but there is much more to it than one knows. All that one imagines or images assumes the world, and the thesis of the world is based above all on our being bodily in the midst of it, inhabiting it. To be in the world is to be situated in relation to what else there is or was, near or remote in time or space.

A theory which, like Hume's, takes a mental image to be an entity, hypostatizes a kind of consciousness of things, and makes this hypostasis what we are conscious of. But what we are conscious of is simply what we imagine - the thing or person or situation. There are no intra-mental entities; all there is is in the world.

To remember or recall is to be conscious of what is past. But in the Humean and similar later theories one cannot literally do this, for what is past is no more and whatever one is conscious of must be present now. Pastness has therefore to be, or be reducible to, some characteristic of what is present; the passage of time has, as it were, to be represented by dates stamped on what is present. The "present" itself becomes an entirely nugatory concept. One is forced into such a view if one assumes that what one is conscious of,

the objects of consciousness, what one sees or imagines, is in consciousness, in the mind, an intra-mental entity. But what one is remembering, thinking of, imagining, does not need to be now any more than it needs to be here. In any case, these words have no meaning except in relation to "then" and "there". There is only one answer to the question what I am imagining when I imagine my flat in Edinburgh, and only one answer to the question what I am remembering when I recall a party in it four years ago. If I were not here and now, it would not be there and "ago", as I think of it.

One need never speak of mental images at all. I suspect that the expression is inherited from introspectionist psychology and philosophy, according to which there were two domains in which events occurred and could be observed: the world and the mind. The natural way of talking is to say one imagines something or fancies something. But the view that when one "has an image", one is contemplating an intra-mental entity is deeply rooted. When one denies this, one is often taken to be denying that people have mental images. One man, for example, will assert emphatically that in doing a calculation he reads the answer off the slide rule in his head. This is not only a legitimate use of the English language; it is an excellent description. But there is no slide rule in his head, nor is he literally reading off the slide rule. He is <sup>imagining</sup> imagining the slide rule, the setting, and what it would read. This is a perfectly normal way of doing mental calculations; some people imagine a blackboard. To think in images is not to contemplate or look at intra-mental entities.

Chapter 5

THE ILLUSION OF REAL APPEARANCES

The impressions that Hume has in mind are for the most part visual, and such an impression has to be thought of as a flat patchwork of colours at no distance. Owing to his constant reference to things, impressions are also identifiable with qualities of things, e.g. the redness and shine of an apple, and there is no doubt that Hume thought of them in this way quite often. But strictly, as he makes plain when he insists that "our sight informs us not of outness", the visual impression is a flat patchwork. What it corresponds to is the visual field or more narrowly to one appearance of a thing, in the visual field. It is "determinate in quality and quantity", not only of a definite colour but of a definite size, and shape.

The mistake which he makes is not confined to those who have held that our sight informs us not of outness. It is simply the belief that the size and shape of an appearance of a thing are determinate or determinable. Once again the trouble arises from, or is at least accentuated by, regarding an appearance as if it were a picture, and the camera has if anything tended to confirm the illusion. A determinable length, breadth or height is a measurable dimension, and such dimensions are defined operationally by specifying the standard and the procedure. There is no problem, apart from the technical, about measuring things. The length, breadth or height of any familiar thing may be measured by some invariant standard within certain limits of accuracy, whether this is done by stretching a tape measure along it, or indirectly by theodolite and triangulation, or by some other means. Shape may also be specified geometrically by the additional measurement of angles and curves. And so by other means



for volume, weight, density, specific gravity. This is what quantitative determination means. It is nonsense to say that a quantity is determinate when it cannot in principle be determined, and that, as I shall show, is precisely what is alleged when appearances of things are held to be of determinate size. When something is measured in the standard way, the result in feet and inches or in metres and centimetres is said to be the length or breadth or height. Whether the thing is 50 miles away or close at hand, no matter how anyone sees it or how it looks, these are its measurements which may be verified. That is what objective measurement, quantitative determination, means. (It can of course be vastly more complicated and indirect than my simple examples suggest, but my point is not affected.)

Measurement is taken so much for granted, that people often talk happily about real and apparent size without realising that they are talking about what, in a peculiar sense, are incommensurables; the sense being that one of them is not mensurable. The size of a thing as seen is always an apparent size. To see the real size of something is to estimate how big it actually is from the look of it, from the apparent size, taking account of the distance and comparison with other things of known size. The notion of real or actual or objective size is incomprehensible without reference to measurement. The estimation of height and distance depends on practice and experience, and no doubt, since some people are hopeless at it, on some kind of flair. With practice, on familiar territory, it becomes prompt and rapid; a look is enough. One can then say, loosely, that one sees the real size. Similarly the practised eye can see the weight of a bullock. But no one, so far as I know, speaks of the real and apparent weights of a bullock: it would make just as good sense, and would indeed form an exact parallel to the way in which the ex-



pressions "real size" and "apparent size" are commonly used. A standard of measurement can be very rough, one's own height, for example. If one is of average height and one finds a man when close at hand "much smaller than he looked" it is not difficult to see what standard one is using from long habit.

Since things look bigger when they are nearer and smaller when they are further away, in a certain sense - perspectively, it is sometimes supposed that the actual height of the appearance to an observer at any point is determinate, that is, that it can be determined by measurement. But this is not so. If one holds a ruler at arm's length, closes one eye, and "measures" a distant tree against the ruler, one has measured neither the height of the tree nor the height of the appearance of the tree. One could roughly measure the tree in this way if one knew the distance from the eye to the ruler and from the ruler to the tree. Very roughly! But merely by holding up the ruler and looking at what the tree "measures" against it, one has not measured anything. Has one then measured the height of the appearance of the tree to someone standing where one is standing? Again no. For if one holds the ruler at half arm's length, it measures less on the ruler than it does at full arm's length. And if one thinks to specify that the ruler must be held at full arm's length, what one is doing is treating the tree as if it were a picture of a tree on which the ruler is laid. But the tree is not at arm's length, nor is the appearance of the tree. If the tree or the appearance of it were a picture and the ruler laid on it, the distance from it of the eye would make no difference to the measurement. The appearance is not a picture, but even to appear to measure it, one must treat it as if it were a picture at a specified distance from the eye. This distance is entirely arbitrary. This kind of "measurement" is indeed used to get the proportions right for a drawing. But one is not measuring the appearances. One would be if they were pictures at a certain

distance from the eye. But they are not. One can measure the two lines drawn on the blackboard to produce the Müller-Lyer illusion: they are found to be equal. One cannot measure the apparent inequality and say how much longer one appears than the other. Similarly, one cannot measure the angle of apparent convergence of the lines in the Zöllner illusion, nor how much bigger the moon appears at the horizon than at the zenith.

The assumption that the size and shape of appearances are determinate or determinable makes some discussions of the constancies of size and shape strictly unintelligible. It is sometimes supposed that the relative sizes of things as we see them could be compared with or measured against their relative sizes as these are projected on the retina or on a photographic plate where we are standing. This is of course a fallacy: they cannot be compared for there is nothing to compare. What we see as we see it, is not another picture or an image like the one on the retina, but simply the thing itself as we see it. That is all an appearance is. All sizes of things as we see them are apparent sizes.

An appearance, like a mental image, is nowhere. It is not an object, and not, as Kant would say, determinable as an object. The house I look at over there through the window is so determinable - its dimensions, the materials and their properties. But not the appearance of the house. The two sides of the house and the roof I can see from here are not the appearance: they are the parts of the house that are visible from here. They are determinable as objects. To determine the appearance one would have to find it, and where is it? Not where the house is, not where the eye is, not on the retina, and nowhere in between. But there is an appearance? Only in a sense analogous to that in which there are mental images. The appearance of the house is

simply my seeing the house, how I see the house, the house as I see it, how the house looks to me, the look of the house. There is an appearance in the same sense as there is a look. But all that comes between the house and me is the ground and the other things on it - two trees, a wall, a shed and some grass, possibly a haze.

But isn't the appearance, it may be asked, smaller from here than if you were standing on the grass? Translated, this question runs: Doesn't the house look smaller from here than it would if you were standing on the grass? There are two answers to this. (1) Yes, that's because I'm further away from it than if I were standing on the grass. (2) No, it looks the same size but further away than if I were standing on the grass. To give one answer and think of the other is to find it no less true.

It is obviously true that things look smaller the further away they are - at the limit they can be mere specks on the horizon. It is no less true that, for example, the Pan-Am building in New York can still look enormous, and indeed peculiarly enormous, at a distance of six or seven miles. But things look the way they look, the way we see them. "The way they look to us" and "the way we see them" are correlative and interchangeable expressions. The things as we see them, the way we see them, is the way they look to us. That is what appearances are, the looks of things. An appearance cannot have a determinate size or shape, because it is not a thing. Nor is it anywhere, nor in two dimensions, nor in three. One may say indifferently that one sees or observes the thing, or the look or appearance of the thing, but the look or appearance of the thing is merely the way the thing looks as one sees it. Looks are not determinable as objects, for they are not objects.

The view that "our sight informs us not of distance or outness (so to speak)

immediately and without a certain reasoning and experience, as is acknowledged by the most rational philosophers" leads almost infallibly to the illusion of real appearances. The appearance thus hypostatized is easily assimilable to the hypostatized mental image, which is indeed at no distance whatsoever, since it is not in space at all, but which is regarded as a sort of picture, and of course pictures are flat. Hume constantly assumes that visual perception was "originally" in the flat, not in depth, but never explains how depth is derived from breadth and height, nor how breadth and height could be perceived at no distance at all. The problem is not to know what it is to see in depth - that is the way we do see - but what it would be like not to. What could "seeing two-dimensionally" possibly mean? How could we see in two if we didn't see in three? By this, I do not mean how we could see things or patches side by side or one above the other if we did not see one before or behind the other, but how we could see them side by side if we were in the same flat plane as them. Where would the plane be?

Hume, perhaps because he realised the absurdity, never mentions babies in this connection, though it is very hard to imagine what two-dimensional seeing could refer to except the way babies might naïvely be supposed to see. The power and ability to see, to fixate, develop in the first few months after birth. At what point an infant can reasonably be said to be seeing things is not very easy to determine. Sight continues normally to develop thereafter. But it is entirely meaningless to say that an infant sees two-dimensionally, ever.

Though the distinction is simple, the confusion is often made between seeing in depth and judging distance according to some measure or even saying which of two distances is the longer. Judging distance is very tricky. Seeing in depth is not. To see is to see in depth. To see anything is to look at it,

fix it, attend to it, make it the form of the Gestalt. To do this, it has to be at a distance. If it is too close, it cannot be seen - you draw your head back to get a sight of it. To see something is to see what it is or to try to make out what it is. When something moves in the margin of vision, what we see is movement; to see what it is, we must look and fix it. One isn't seeing anything properly when one is day-dreaming with the eyes open - except intermittently - for to see anything is to look at it, attend to it, whether it is a broad landscape or some particular feature of it. Whatever is seen is seen at some distance.

The distance to the house I see is determinable just like the height of the house. Just as the dimensions of the house may be measured, so may the ground between the house and me. But the look of the distance cannot be measured any more than the look of the house. What I see is of course the ground, the two trees, the wall, the shed, ranged between the house and me, and covering a certain distance: let me call that the distance for short. For the house to look as it does, the distance must look as it does. To see the house as we see it, we must see the distance as we see it, and to see the distance as we see it, we must see the house as we see it. One does not see the house and the distance but the house at a distance <sup>or the distance</sup> to the house. The look of the house and of the distance, that is to say, are parts of a whole, of a configuration, or ensemble or Gestalt. Their relations are internal, not external: they mutually imply each other. That is why one can give two answers to the question: Does the house look smaller from here than if you were standing on the grass? When one says "yes", one is attending rather to the look of the house. When one says "no", one is attending rather to the look of the distance. There is of course no contradiction for the look of the house or the distance,

the appearances, are simply the way we see the house at a distance or the distance to the house.

In estimating what the distance is, there is no doubt at all about the importance of "reasoning and experience". Open-air people can judge distances well in their own territories, whether in temporal ("time to walk") or spatial terms, but not in other territories where the atmosphere is clearer or hazier, the trees more or less numerous, and so on. What one learns is what things look like when they are, say, a mile away under various conditions in this territory. An actual distance as measured cannot be compared with an apparent distance but only with what you judge the distance to be. The look of the distance, the distance as you see it cannot be compared with anything but only with another look, any more than the height of the house as you see it can be compared with the measured height of the house. Some people achieve remarkable accuracy in estimating heights, lengths and distances. It is as if they could see the mileage. But unless one has occasion to make such estimates for one purpose or another, one just does not do it. One sees things in reach or near or further or far away. But beyond the reach of the arm it is not easy without deliberate practice to guess how far. One has to calculate how far it is even to the wall of the room. But one sees where the wall is and the floor from here to the wall. One can only measure the distance, not the distance as we see it, not the appearance of the distance, ~~not the appearance of the distance,~~ not the look of the floor from here to the wall, but only the floor itself.

If I seem to have laboured the point that to see is to see in depth, my excuse must be that it is frequently forgotten. It is rarely denied; people just forget it or fail to realise what it means. I have mentioned one sort



of absurdity which crops up in discussion of the constancies: the suggestion that real and apparent sizes can be compared. Another example is the suggestion that the depth of the circular rim of a bowl as drawn by a normal person represents a compromise between the circularity which he knows it to have and the retinal projection. This kind of view really amounts to the old judgemental, intellectualist theory of perception, possibly transferred to the "unconscious" and therefore beyond the reach of argument. What the normal person draws is an attempt to represent the bowl as he sees it, the way it looks. Essentially the same point crops up in discussions of how the words "circle" and "square" come to be applied to so many different "apparent" shapes, i.e., skew projections of circles and squares. To understand this "problem" at all one has to assume that these different shapes are all in the flat. If that were so it would be quite impossible to imagine how the different shapes could ever be recognised as circular or square. But these words are simply not applied to skew projections of circles and squares. They are applied to things seen in depth. I could not see the penny lying flat on the window-sill six feet away if I saw it head-on. There is no skew projection of the penny as we see it, nor was there ever. What we see is a penny at an angle.

To see things in depth is to see them from where one is and therefore as having another side which is out of sight. It is not necessary, and it is indeed implausible, to suppose that children who draw a face in profile with both eyes staring straight out are doing anything but trying to represent the face as they see it. The face is seen as having another side with another eye corresponding to this one. The representation of what is visible in more or less "photographic" proportions has to be learned somewhat laboriously. But if some theories of perception had any foundation this is what one would expect



children to do naturally.

The standard blackboard illusions are appearances of a kind which we normally never consider illusory partly because we do not go around measuring the sizes of things we see and comparing one size with another. The Müller-Lyer illusion admirably illustrates a commonplace: that measurably equal lengths or areas on one surface can look very different. This fact is of course constantly exploited in architecture. To cite a very simple example, the wall of a building may be given height by putting tall narrow windows in the ground floor and somewhat shorter ones above. Though the wall is square, it will look taller than it is wide. If the apparent inequality of the lines in the Müller-Lyer is to be called illusory - and in a sense it is illusory - it is important to remember that a vast proportion of our perceptual experience is also illusory by the same token. The reason for doubting whether one ought to call it illusory is that it is normally quite reliable and lets us down mainly where measurement is required, e.g., when we buy a pair of curtains that look the right size for our window. Two measurably equal rooms can look quite different in size according to the décor. The same room can look cramped or spacious. The decorator learns what makes rooms look bigger, taller, or wider; the dressmaker learns what slims fat women, narrows broad shoulders, etc., One of the commonest illusions is that the eyes are in the upper half of the head. Another is that the legs are very much longer than the arms.

Hypostatized appearances and images and the illusion of immanence all belong to the same kind of doctrine, in which what we call things have somehow to be constructed out of these hypostases regarded as data. In my view nothing can be regarded as a datum, a pure datum, or rather only our ongoing, actual perceptual experience. All one can do is to analyse that. On this view, the



appearance of a thing is the look of it, the way it looks to me, the way I see it. Without the seeing and the seen, me and it, there could be no appearance. This not only seems tautological; it is. To see is to see something from somewhere; to see it as one sees it is to see it as it looks. One cannot see anything except as it looks. This is not to deny, but to affirm and insist, that it looks, or may look, different when one has learned more about it, which mostly consists in looking and examining. But to regard the look or the appearance as an entity is to make a false hypostasis. The appearance is nowhere. Nor is the image anywhere.

Whether one is seeing or imagining, one is where one is bodily. In seeing, the object is present; it is it one sees and one sees it where it is from where one is oneself. But in imagining, it is not bodily present to one's own body, one's own eyes. One images it as one saw it, though it is not present to be looked at, to be explored and examined. One imagines it the way it looked, the configuration, the situation, the physiognomy. In remembering a pretty girl, one may have forgotten - if one every noticed - the colour of the eyes, the length of the nose, how far the hair came down the neck; one cannot look, for there is nothing to look at. But one remembers the expression, the smile, the charm, the twinkle in the eye, the walk - the look, the appearance.

Chapter 6

THINGS AND APPEARANCES

The objective characteristics of anything are the determinable, verifiable characteristics, to be determined by standard procedures under standard conditions, which are never completely specified. But is a thing not reducible to all its appearances - all the looks of the thing? No: neither to one of the appearances, nor to all of them, whatever "all" might mean. But it is apprehended or constituted as one thing through the appearances, the diverse and changing appearances.

Let us take for example a house. There is no look, no appearance apart from the way I see the house, the way it looks to me. As I walk round it, the look changes, but the house is like the ground under my feet: it stays where it is and does not change position. It is because it stays where it is that the appearance changes as I move. If the front did not "close up" as the side comes into view and "broadens out", I would not be moving bodily, nor seeing in depth. I never cease to see what I see there in depth as a house, which stays still while I move. If the appearance were not changing as I move, the house would not be staying where it is. It looks different from different places, but it is by virtue of looking different that it stays the same. I do not just see an oblong shape from straight in front, and a narrowing quadrilateral shape with two parallel and two converging boundaries when I move to one side. I see an oblong shape head-on and an oblong shape at an angle, staying where it is as I move to one side.

If the oblong were not foreshortened when looked at from one side it would have ceased to be an oblong, or it would have moved with me. If the appear-

ance, the look of the house, had not changed, the house would have moved, or I would not have moved. One's own movement over the ground as well as by turning the head and body and eyes are an essential part of perceptual experience. Movement is in depth and what one sees is in depth in the same space. Things would not be seen in depth if they did not look different from different places.

Theories which reduce things to their appearances usually treat the appearances as flat projections on photographic plates, in spite of the fact that a house or a tree, for example, never look flat except when seen in silhouette or through a fog, and even then are seen at some distance. It is never explained how a third dimension can be derived from two. To treat appearances as appearances in depth, on the other hand, is already to treat them as appearances of things having another side as well as the visible one.

The first condition of determination is abstraction, conceptualisation. It is always in some respect that a thing is determined: length, weight, volume, mass, melting point, boiling point, acidity. Determination need not be quantitative, but it is always, as it were, dimensional: the use of litmus to determine acidity is an example. But in the last resort a determinable characteristic is measurable directly or indirectly. It is a dimension, defined operationally. The primary qualities were such dimensions, and the distinction between the primary and the secondary qualities was at bottom between those which had been found reducible to measure and those which had not.

But determination always depends in the last resort on direct observation. To measure the length of a wall in the ordinary way the tape must be held against one end of the wall and seen to be against it, or held parallel to it

and seen to be parallel to it. The only means of deciding whether any measurement is correct is by checking and re-checking, directly or indirectly.

But what is measured is not the look of the measure and the wall, but the wall by the measure.

In giving an account of perceptual experience, chiefly in terms of seeing, my purpose so far has been partly to show that the notion of raw data occurring to a disembodied consciousness (or in later versions just occurring and associating) is unintelligible in relation to actual experience and at best wildly hypothetical as regards infantile experience. To be a body, an embodied self, is to be in space in a world of things. From the standpoint of the older physiology, and following it, the older psychology, sense experience was essentially reducible to the action of a physically determinate environment on the several specialised senses. The resulting data had no intrinsic connection and had by regular concomitance to become associated. The theory has long since lost its supposed physiological basis: the effect of any stimulus is complex and has to be understood in terms ultimately of the whole organism. But quite apart from that, actual sense experience could not be deduced from any physiological theory. This experience is of a world which is accessible to sight and touch. A thing we see is at a distance; we can move towards it and touch it. We do not have data to be correlated, associated, and brought together into things. The same thing is accessible to sight and touch. The tangible is seen and the visible is touched.

Strict data doctrines cannot say anything about actual perceptual experience, about the experience of seeing, touching, hearing, moving about. Nor can they, for example, make the important distinction between touching and being touched, or between merely having one's eyes open and actually looking at things,

or between the figure and ground of a Gestalt. They cannot officially and explicitly admit that perception is indissolubly connected with embodiment and movement, with being in the world, in the midst of things, being "here" as a body and seeing things "there". Data cannot be seen and touched, for to see is to see with one's eyes, and to touch is to touch with some part of one's body. These facts are smuggled in surreptitiously by classifying data as visual, tactual and kinaesthetic, as if visuality, tactuality, and kinaestheticity, were properties of the data. (Consciousness or awareness, if it is admitted, is essentially disembodied and passively receptive.) I say "surreptitiously" for while it could not be admitted that a datum was visible without admitting that it could be seen, and therefore inviting the question "where?", it is evidently supposed that it can be plausibly said to be visual without being ever actually seen or see-able.

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As I have already remarked, the mind and its activities and propensities, which figure prominently throughout the "Treatise", do not form part of the "system" though the system could hardly be described without reference to them. Again, whenever Hume appeals to the reader's experience as he frequently does, his appeal is to reflexion, but he has no explicit doctrine of reflexion. What must be taken to be his most considered account of belief as it is given in the Appendix (Treatise, Pp.628-9) identifies belief with the manner of conceiving an idea, and is of course a reflexive description. Similarly that "the imagination has the command over all its ideas" could only be known reflexively. The same point could be made of other passages throughout the "Treatise". For any description of experience of the world, of subjective experience, as distinct from the objective determination of things, is reflexive. Everyone, every day, offers reflexive descriptions. "I see" is reflexive, and



this is not simply a matter of the pronoun: my evidence that anyone else sees depends in the last resort on my seeing and this can only be known reflexively by actually seeing. So commonplace and indispensable is reflexion that it is commonly denied, as for instance by Ryle who employs it constantly in "The Concept of Mind".

Hume, as I say, has no explicit doctrine of reflexion but some of the most perplexing things about his doctrine have, I think, to be attributed to his failure to recognise it. The most important of these is the <sup>d</sup>identification of the consciousness of the object and the object of consciousness in the "perception", the hypostatized appearance and mental image, in which seeing and imagining coalesce with the object seen or imagined. But for Hume, the hypostatized impression or idea is itself an object of consciousness. The sense in which it may be so regarded is that in which we may be reflexively aware of seeing or imagining something. To be aware of a mental image as such is simply to be reflexively aware of imaging something.

To Hume's hypostasis of the mental image and the appearance may be traced ~~to~~ that version of his doctrine of belief which states that it is the liveliness of an idea. This distortion of the language reflects Hume's identification of the imagining and what is imagined. Whereas "belief" would in ordinary language be ascribed to the subject or consciousness, it is here apparently ascribed to the object or rather identified with the liveliness of the object - the idea.

But the perceptions are themselves also regarded as objects, and his subsequent account of belief is that the mind is enlivened by impressions and itself enlivenes the attendant ideas.

But a further complication is that belief tends to be identified with an

"impression of reflexion", that is to say, with a feeling or passion or sentiment. Hume for obvious reasons never refers to these as objects, but he does regard them frequently as identifiable and distinctive events or occurrences, which may be, as it were, observed. Each passion is specifically different from the others and is recognisable as such. What I have said of the impression of sensation, that it is at once consciousness and object, is also true of the impression of reflexion.

Chapter 7

THE PHYSIOLOGY OF THE PASSIONS

In Hume's theory of knowledge as it is presented in the third and fourth parts of Book I, the independently existing world, the world of nature, consists of systematically related fictions of the imagination, objects of belief, and the occurrence of the impressions and ideas cannot therefore be ascribed to natural causes. But in the first two sections of Book I, and especially in Book II, the physiological theory on which the doctrine of impressions and ideas was based, emerges clearly, and this theory of course presupposes a physical world.

To illustrate, here is a quaint example from Book I, where Hume is accounting for the mistakes arising from the relations of contiguity and resemblance among ideas:

"'Twou'd have been easy to have made an imaginary dissection of the brain, and have shewn, why upon our conception of any idea, the animal spirits run into all the contiguous traces, and rouse up the other ideas, that are related to it. But tho' I have neglected any advantage, which I might have drawn from this topic in explaining the relations of ideas, I am afraid I must here have recourse to it, in order to account for the mistakes that arise from these relations. I shall therefore observe, that as the mind is endow'd with a power of exciting any idea it pleases; whenever it dispatches the spirits into that region of the brain, in which the idea is plac'd; these spirits always excite the idea, when they run precisely into the proper traces, and rummage that cell, which belongs to the idea. . But as their motion is seldom direct,

and naturally turns a little to the one side or the other; for this reason the animal spirits, falling into the contiguous traces, present other related ideas in lieu of that, which the mind desir'd at first to survey. This change we are not always sensible of; but continuing still the same train of thought, make use of the related idea, which is presented to us, and employ it in our reasoning, as if it were the same with what we demanded. This is the cause of many mistakes and sophisms in philosophy; as will naturally be imagin'd, and as it wou'd be easy to shew, if there was occasion." (Treatise, P.60-61)

The same physiological theory underlies Hume's causal theory of the passions; the impressions of sensation are physically caused and themselves cause the impressions of reflexion:

"Original impressions or impressions of sensation are such as without any antecedent perception arise in the soul, from the constitution of the body, from the animal spirits, or from the application of objects to the external organs. Secondary, or reflective impressions are such as proceed from some of these original ones, either immediately or by the interposition of its idea. Of the first kind are all the impressions of the senses, and all bodily pains and pleasures: Of the second are the passions, and other emotions resembling them.

"'Tis certain, that the mind, in its perceptions, must begin somewhere; and that since the impressions precede their correspondent ideas, there must be some impressions, which without any introduction make their appearance in the soul. As these depend upon natural and physical causes, the examination of them wou'd lead me too far from my present subject, into the sciences of anatomy and natural philosophy. For this reason I shall here confine myself

to those other impressions, which I have call'd secondary and reflective, as arising either from the original impressions, or from their ideas. Bodily pains and pleasures are the source of many passions, both when felt and consider'd by the mind; but arise originally in the soul, or in the body, whichever you please to call it, without any preceding thought or perception." (Treatise, P.275-6)

Bodily pains and pleasures are both in the soul and in the body. From the physiological standpoint which underlies his doctrine the same can be said of all impressions whatsoever. For "every impression, external and internal, passions, affections, sensations, pains and pleasures, are originally on the same footing; and that whatever other differences we may observe among them, they appear, all of them, in their true colours, as impressions or perceptions." (Treatise, P.190) Though he generally reserves the expression "impressions of sensation" for the primary impressions, the secondary impressions are in effect sensations too. Hume sometimes distinguishes between the emotions and the passions or between the sensations of the passions and the passions, whose character is determined by "the general bent or tendency" (P.385), and it is evident that what he means by the passion of pride, for example, is the circumstances of its occurrence as well as the occurrence itself. But all the impressions are felt, and how should they be felt but bodily? But if so, how are what we call "bodily pains and pleasures" distinguished from the other sensations?

Hume never expounds the physiological theory on which he relies, but it seems to be essentially similar to the one which Descartes presents in "Les Passions de l'Ame". The passions are caused by the movement of the animal spirits. Descartes uses the word "passion" in a wider and a narrower sense.

In the wider sense, passion is opposed to action, and some ideas, which for Hume are copies of impressions, and which are called by Descartes "imagination", are strictly speaking passions. But Descartes on the whole takes passions in exactly the same sense as Hume. They are "perceptions, or sentiments, or emotions of the soul, which are related especially to it, and which are caused, and sustained, and fortified by some movement of the spirits." (Art.27).

Sentiments are sensations, as Descartes makes clear in Art.28: "One may also name them sentiments, because they are received in the soul in the same fashion as the objects of the external senses and are known by it in the same way". As he goes on to explain in Art.29, other "sentiments" we relate to external objects such as odours, sounds and colours, and others to our own body, such as hunger, thirst and pain. But since "the soul is united to all the parts of the body conjointly", a sentiment is evidently in both soul and body, or "in the soul, or in the body, whichever you please to call it".

Thus from the physiological standpoint, Hume's view is near enough to Descartes'. Perhaps this is to say no more than that physiological doctrines from the time of Descartes to that of Hume have a family resemblance. But it is likely enough that Hume had read Descartes' treatise, and that he regarded all sensations as being in a sense in the body, though only some - the bodily pains and pleasures - were referred to the body. (In his other doctrine, I repeat, the body is, like any other body, a fiction of the imagination, and the imagination is as it were a pure disembodied consciousness.)

A further passage which casts some light on the matter occurs in Book II, part 2, Section VIII, "Of malice and envy." As I shall show, it is of interest from several points of view. In it, Hume discusses the effect of comparison, or contrast, in sense perception. He begins by remarking that men "always



judge more of objects by comparison than from their intrinsic worth and value". It might seem difficult to say what in his terms this last phrase "intrinsic worth and value" could strictly mean. This tendency to judge of things by comparison, he says, "is an original quality of the soul, and similar to what we have every day experience of in our bodies.... Any gentle pain, that follows a violent one, seems as nothing... a violent pain, succeeding a gentle one, is doubly grievous and uneasy."

The next paragraph is worth quoting as a whole:-

"This no one can doubt of with regard to our passions and sensations. But there may arise some difficulty with regard to our ideas and objects. When an object augments or diminishes to the eye or imagination from a comparison with others, the image and idea of the object are still the same, and are equally extended in the retina, and in the brain or organ of perception. The eyes refract the rays of light, and the optic nerves convey the images to the brain in the very same manner, whether a great or small object has preceded; nor does even the imagination alter the dimensions of its object on account of a comparison with others. The question then is, how from the same impression and the same idea we can form such different judgments concerning the same object, and at one time admire its bulk, and at another despise its littleness. This variation in our judgments must certainly proceed from a variation in some perception; but as the variation lies not in the immediate impression or idea of the object, it must lie in some other impression, that accompanies it."

It will be remembered that when Hume insists that our sight informs us not of outness, he insists that "properly speaking, 'tis not out body we perceive, when we regard our limbs and members, but certain impressions, which enter by the senses; so that the ascribing a real and corporeal existence to these im-

pressions and to their objects, is an act of the mind as difficult to explain as that which we examine at present." But the only evidence for believing that our sight informs us not of outness is of the kind cited in the above passage -" the image and idea of the object are still the same, and are equally extended in the retina, and in the brain and organ of perception."

There is a further curious point about this passage. Hume is saying that an impression can look bigger or smaller by contrast, though an impression strictly is as it appears, and is of determinate size. This paradox is a natural error resulting from the illusion of real appearances. The hypothesised appearance is treated as if it were a thing, and like a thing it can look bigger or smaller.

Hume's explanation is that the emotion is confused with the object. "... no object is 'presented to the senses, nor image form'd in the fancy, but what is accompany'd with some emotion or movement of the spirits proportioned to it; and however custom may make us insensible of this sensation, and cause us to confound it with the object or idea, 'twill be easy, by careful and exact experiments, to separate and distinguish them." Not content with this more or less plausible view, Hume is then carried away and proceeds to suggest that "every part of extension, and every unite of number {i.e. the "real" unit or minimum sensible] has a separate emotion attending it... and though that emotion be not always agreeable, yet by its conjunction with others, and by its agitating the spirits to a just pitch, it contributes to the production of the admiration, which is always agreeable." A great object is attended with <sup>a</sup> great emotion, a small object with a small. When a great succeeds a small, it "rises beyond its ordinary proportion" and "we naturally imagine that the object has likewise increased... Those, who are acquainted with the

metaphysical part of optics, and know how we transfer the judgments and conclusions of the understanding to the senses, will easily conceive this whole operation." (Treatise, PP.373-5)

My reason for dealing at some length with what many might consider the worst part of Hume's doctrine is that much of the better part rests upon it. Hume makes no deliberate distinction between the body as an object and the body as subject, sometimes treating it as the one and sometimes as the other without realising that there is any ambiguity. The confusion of perceptual and bodily experience with physiological and physical fact and theory is as common now as it was then. My essential contention is that one cannot make sense of either unless they are distinguished.

Hume, I believe, is right in regarding the passions as bodily and right in thinking that emotion or affect is never absent from perception, in spite of the fantastic physical account which he attempts to give of this. His doctrine of the passions is of course mainly concerned with the more complexly conditioned social passions and sentiments: it constitutes the prolegomena to his theory of morals, with which I shall not be dealing. The point I am concerned with, however, is fundamental in his whole doctrine of the passions and of morals. For Hume, percepts cause affects; it follows from this that, among other things, all the passions, including the moral sentiments, are mechanically caused and likewise the moral judgments which express them.

But the foundations of this whole structure lie in physiology, where the term "impression" originates. Hume, as I have said, identifies the "impression" with what would ordinarily be called the appearance or look of something, and makes of this an entity and causal agent. Hume believes that the passion is caused by the external impression and is then projected back on to it, as it

were, in the form of a value which may be predicated of it. There is no evidence for this in perceptual experience. As I shall argue, we see what we see as we see it, values and all. The only evidence Hume has for his view is of the kind which I have tried to illustrate above - evidence drawn from physiological and physical theory. At best, this would be an account, not of experience, but of its causes, how it comes to be as it is. But even as such it will not do, for no evidence of the looks or appearances of things is to be found in physical or physiological theory, but only in perceptual experience.

As I shall show, in the illusion of real appearances the colour, size and shape are held to be real because they are believed to be determinate. As I have argued, and shall argue further, not even the size and shape are determinate in the sense demanded by the theory. They are of equal status so far as this is concerned with the values. The physiological theory required that the values be left out of the external impression - the real appearance - hence in Hume's doctrine the impression or object derives whatever quality it may have apart from size, shape and colour from the emotions or passions it causes. The impression or real appearance in itself has size, shape and colour, but not pleasantness or unpleasantness, menace or invitation, warmth of colour, grandeur, fragility, grace or splendour. As the real appearance is an illusion, this theory of projection, whereby it appears to have some qualities which it does not really have, is doubly so.

Chapter 8

THE DOMAIN OF VALUE

If appearances are the way things look, the way we see them, qualities and values belong to the appearances. What one sees is the things, but one sees them only as one sees them - from a place, at a distance, looking big or massive or threatening or inviting or beautiful or ugly. One is not looking at the appearances - they are not there to be looked at - but at the things, which appear in a certain way and have a certain look; they are in certain surroundings, part of a certain configuration. That is the way we see them, the way they look, and that is the appearance, the look, and the expression they have.

But, it may be said, we do not literally see the splendour, grace, etc., of Salisbury Cathedral. No, I reply, in a sense you do not see the appearance at all; you see the cathedral. But that is the way you see it - clothed in the splendour of sunshine, just as you see it looking slender and graceful.

But, it may be said, to say something is splendid, or graceful, or beautiful is to make a value judgment. Yes, I say, whatever you see as you see it may be expressed in a statement or judgment - bigness, smallness, distance, dullness, hugeness, repulsiveness. But surely, it may be said, to say something is big is not to make a value judgment. To this I cannot say yes or no, but must say: isn't it?

A man who is six foot five is big and a man who is four foot ten is small: the former is much above the normal height, and the latter much below it, according to their measured heights. Again, you may say St. Peter's is very big and St. Paul's not very big, if you happen to know that St. Peter's is

three times the size of St. Paul's - or whatever the measured proportion is. But the hugeness of St. Peter's as you look at it across the square is not a matter of comparative measurements. Nor is the hugeness of St. Paul's as you turn a corner into a narrow street and see it looming up and perhaps tilt your head back to see the top of the dome.

But, it may be said, you judge that it is huge because you have to tilt your head back, and the other buildings are small in comparison. Yes, I reply, but this account is somewhat misleading. I do not compare what I see with the size of the other buildings and the width of the street and the cars and people in it, and then, taking into account the fact that I have had to tilt my head, judge (i.e. conclude): this building must be huge. I am in a situation, a configuration which includes the street, the buildings and St. Paul's, and I am in it, a part of it, neck, eyes, head and all. If I weren't, then of course St. Paul's would not look huge. But I am, and it does: it looms up of a sudden and I see it as I see it - huge. If I then say "it's huge" or merely "big", what sort of judgment is this? It is certainly not an objective judgment of fact.

Size, proportion and scale in this context are matters of the look of things. A building would look different in another setting, and that includes looking bigger or smaller. It might make one scene and ruin another; dominate, dwarf and bully its neighbours or take a seemly part in the ensemble. Size in this context is a matter of the way the building looks, or the way we see it, and we don't all see it the same way. "Huge", "enormous", "tiny", "giant", "dwarf" all belong fairly obviously to this kind of talk. So, much of the time, do "big" and "small". The same of course goes for heaviness and lightness of weight or softness and loudness of sound; these expressions do



not primarily refer to any sort of measurement at all: a thing feels heavy in a sense analogous to that in which it looks big.

It is because of their secondary meaning in connection with measurement and comparison of measured quantities and sizes, that one might suppose otherwise in the case of "big" and "small". This secondary use may be called their conventional use.\* Size, scale and proportion in the primary sense are inseparable. The size of a building is a function of its setting, its relation to the other buildings and the landscape or townscape. The only other meaning of size is measured size. Size in the primary sense is what is called a value in architecture and the visual arts, and it is not easy to make the distinction between a value in this sense and a quality. In the case of colour, one might think to distinguish between the quality - red, say - and the value in the picture - fieriness, say. But this is quite arbitrary. At any rate, size is a value or a quality in the same sense as colour or shape: a distinguishable aspect which is not, however, separable from the others but is an organic part of the whole appearance, the way the thing looks, the way we see it.

To alter the size of one building is to change the proportions of other buildings to it and sometimes to each other, to make them look bigger or smaller. To change the colour is also often to change the size. But what one sees, as one sees it, is not usually analysed in this way: when one sees an enormous building, though this is very much a matter of setting, proportion

\* There is some sort of parallel, though I would not care to press it too far, with the use of "good" to express approval or commendation and its conventional use according to set standards and criteria. See R.M. Hare's "The Language of Morals", Ch.7 on description and evaluation.

and scale, the building is the figure and the rest the ground and the enormity is apprehended as a quality of the building. Hence we may be surprised by a change in its appearance, when so far as we can discover it has remained objectively unchanged: the demolition of a nearby building or the felling of trees can do this.

It is difficult to distinguish aesthetic values from values in the above sense, for the analysis of the aesthetic value of a building, a sculpture, a park or a painting, for example, is in terms of such values as these, which are integral parts of the whole. Nor is it easy to make the distinction between a mere description of the way a thing looks and an aesthetic judgment. To say a building is big is not, except in a special context, to make an aesthetic judgment. But to say it is soaring or towering or massive is to verge upon it; to say it is slender is almost to say it is graceful, and this would commonly be regarded as an aesthetic judgment.

If anyone wants to insist with Hume, for example, that utility or fitness for purpose is the major part of the beauty of things and forms the basis of aesthetic judgment, I would certainly not say him nay, but rather insist that there is much in this. We are doers as well as perceivers and it is as doers that we often perceive. Nor do we all see things the same way - they do not look the same to all of us or to any of us all the time. The "conquest of nature" had not proceeded far enough in centuries earlier than the nineteenth for men to see the Alps as anything but a horrid waste of snow, ice and rocks where little could be grown, though perhaps a useful barrier against the depredations of other men. In the industrial age they saw the

Alps with new eyes; they looked different, and part of the attraction, I would surmise, was that there was no utility or fitness for any sort of serious purpose about them. A matter of contrast, or comparison, as Hume would say, of their pure, unsullied, useless white and the dark, Satanic, very useful mills. I make this short foray into socio-aesthetic history in order to insist that however we come to see things as we do, we do see things as we do, and this is the way they look. Nor can we ever see them except as they look.

Let us now turn to the expressions of things. Things as we see them can have an expression or physiognomy. Sometimes one wants to make some sort of distinction between the expression and the look and sometimes not. Let me say evasively that it is when a look expresses something that I want to call it an expression. The most obvious case of expressions are those on people's faces. A face always has an expression; its expressions are, as it were, modulations of its characteristic look. Blankness and impassivity are of course expressions too. But no less obviously landscapes, buildings, streets, rooms, furniture and ships have expressions as we see them, or can have at least - it depends on the way you look at them - and for many of these the same words are used as for facial expressions: cold, warm, hostile, grim, friendly, welcoming, comfortable, complacent, proud, smug, uneasy, smiling, open, closed, secretive, confident, rakish, raffish and so on. The expressions again are modifications of the characteristic look. A landscape is seen as expressing moods. Animism and the pathetic fallacy are well-founded in perceptual <sup>experience,</sup> especially in childhood, and perhaps one should add in some types of womanhood. Places are sympathetic or unsympathetic. One is at home or not at home in a new place, as one is, or

not, with new people. If Mr. Gradgrind says "Gibberish!", it is because he is concerned with facts, determinate, objectively verifiable facts about things, not with the looks and expressions of things. But even Mr. Gradgrind can only see things as he sees them, as they look. Looks and expressions are not things or facts.

Some philosophers want to deny these commonplaces, while admitting they are commonplaces. The grounds on which objections are raised to the kind of thing I have been saying are: (1) that the expressions of things are illusions; that things do not really have expressions; (2) that the expressions of things are the projections of our feelings; (3) that the smugness or grimness or other expression of a thing is not at any rate a perceptual phenomenon: what is perceived is shape, size and colour, not smugness or grimness or cheekiness.

To (1) I reply: as determinate objects, reduced to their properties and measurable dimensions, things have no expression. Neither do they have a look, an appearance. But we see them as we see them, from where we are, in a certain light, context and configuration, and as they look to us, with a certain expression.

To (2) I reply: a thing cannot look as it does look except to someone who is looking at it, for its look is the way it looks to someone, and the expression belongs to the look. The projection theory of which one form is to be found in Hume - "the propensity of the mind to spread itself upon external objects" - is not in itself an objection: it is <sup>a</sup> theory which attempts to account for the expressions of things, to say how they come to have or seem to have expressions. I shall offer some objections to this

view later.

To (3) I reply: if we do not see the smugness or the grimness, or the grace or elegance, how is it that we think the thing looks smug or grim or graceful or elegant, and say it is smug, etc.? If the grace or grimness is not visible, how do we apprehend it? If it has an elegant shape, say, is the shape seen but not its elegance? But, it may be said, the shape is there objectively; it can be determined, described and measured. That is indeed so, I reply, but not the shape as you see it, the look of the shape, and as you see it it is elegant or otherwise.

The objection underlying (3) is generally founded on some doctrine of the sensationalist or datum type. To explain how a doctrine so implausible so far as our actual perceptual experience goes should have been widely believed, I think one must look at the question historically.

Let us go back to Plato's discussion of sense-perception in the Theaetetus. What is apt to surprise the modern reader are the puzzles about size and number at 154C. "When you compare six dice with four, we say that the six are more than the four or half as many again; while if you compare them with twelve, the six are fewer - only half as many - and one cannot say anything else." Theaetetus agrees and Socrates asks: "Can anything become larger or more otherwise than by being increased? What will you answer?" Theaetetus answers "no" to this question. (154D).

Socrates continues (155A): "Looking at the first of them, I suppose we shall assert that nothing can become greater or less, either in size or number, so long as it remains equal to itself... And secondly, that a thing to which nothing is added and from which nothing is taken away is neither in-

creased nor diminished, but always remains the same in amount... And must we not say, thirdly, that a thing which was not at an earlier moment cannot be at a later moment without becoming and being in process of becoming?

... Now these three admissions, I fancy, fight among themselves in our minds when we make those statements about the dice; or when we say that I, being of the height you see, without gaining or losing in size, may within a year be taller (as I am now) than a youth like you, and later on be shorter, not because I have lost anything in bulk, but because you have grown. For apparently I am later what I was not before, and yet have not become so; for without the process of becoming the result is impossible, and I could not be in process of becoming shorter without losing some of my bulk." Of such puzzles, Theaetetus says, "Sometimes I get quite dizzy with thinking of them."

But the problem for the modern reader is to know what Theaetetus's problem is. It arises from regarding size and number as qualities of things on the one hand and as relations between things on the other. As qualities they cannot change without the thing "becoming". As relations they can - only the other term must "become". As Cornford remarks, the difficulty "exists only for one who thinks of 'large' as a quality residing in the thing which is larger than something else, with 'small' as the answering quality residing in the smaller thing." When compared with something larger it will lose its quality "large" and gain the quality "small". Cornford notes that in the Phaedo Plato regards tallness as an inherent property of the tall person. He adds that tallness was commonly ranked as a physical excellence with beauty, health and strength. It was a property on the same footing as hot or white, and not a relation between the taller person and the shorter. ("Plato's



Theory of Knowledge". P.43-4).

It is natural to dismiss the problem, since obviously all size is relative. But so are all other properties: the colour of anything, for example, is relative to other colours. One blue is bluer than another blue (greenish-blue or purplish-blue), and one white whiter than another white; and of course contrast intensifies colour. Similarly heat and cold are relative. And these are regarded as properties of things in ordinary experience. But so in a way is size: a building is big of course by virtue of its surroundings, but we naturally ascribe this property to the building - the figure - and forget the ground.

It is only in terms of measurement, objective determination, that the problem disappears, for then we are no longer concerned with the mere look of things, the way we see them, and size and quantity become explicitly relative to a standard measure. Obviously nothing is "in itself" big or small. But just as obviously, some things are huge and some tiny as we see them; that is the way they look. The modern tendency, in thinking of size and quantity, is to forget the looks of things and to regard all bigness and smallness as matters of measure, of relation to a standard. Since the sixteenth century, objective determination has meant the reduction of quality to measurable quantity. The first candidate for such reduction long before then was size: length, breadth, height and volume. It is easily forgotten that size was, and is, a quality in the first place. The assumption is that all things are in themselves fully determinate - all qualities are determinable by reduction to measurable dimensions, even<sup>if</sup> this has not actually been accomplished.

The doctrine that the real is the rational in its most prevalent and indeed

triumphant form has for its corollary that the rational is the measurable. But this is not the world as it is lived and experienced directly, the world of values where things have a physiognomy, a look, and look different - bigger or smaller - at different times and bear expressions: the world as we perceive it. Though everyone all the time lives and moves and has his being in this world, it was not much studied. Hume's account of it was tailored to what was scientifically "known" and as we have seen the "impression" is in origin a physiological concept. The procedure of physics required the exclusion from consideration of residual quality and value, or at best their relegation to the status of secondary effects of the physically real upon organic bodies. Direct experience, it was thought, could be causally explained in physical terms.

Of the impressions, it will be recalled, Hume says: "As these depend upon natural and physical causes, the examination of them would lead me too far from my present subject, into the sciences of anatomy and natural philosophy." (Bk.2, Pt.1, Sec.1, P.275). He assumes that the causal relation could be shown even if it never had been, and the impressions would be natural events causally connected with other events and processes. This is of course a natural assumption. For example, colours as we perceive them are associated with reflected light of different wave lengths. Hume's account of the senses, especially of the visual sense, takes the impressions of sense to be the effects of physical causes, and to be, like everything in nature, determinate in quantity. These are the data of consciousness and as they are really - fully determinate - so they appear.

But our perceptual experience is not of impressions, but of things at rest or in motion, changing or unchanging. Physical science starts with these things:

these are what its laws are about - bodies, bits of stuff. If these were not constituted perceptually in the first place, there would be nothing to determine quantitatively in any dimension. Abstraction is abstraction from the concrete. The illusion on which Hume's and other similar theories of perception is based is that our perception of things may be accounted for in terms of physical laws, laws which are first of all about the things which we perceive - bodies, gross matter.

Taking the physical and physiological processes discovered by observation and experiment for granted, the theorist tries to complete the cycle or close the circle and account for experience. But the datum of experience is not a physical event. So it must be a mental event. The theory then merely succeeds in making the notion of physical bodies unintelligible; we first took these to be the things we see and went to work to reduce them to their quantitative dimensions. We finish by holding - if we make the matter explicit - that the bodies we have thus reduced are not those we suppose we see. Our seeing and what we see are then identified and the resultant entity is called a perception or mental event, physically caused. Hume is both the victim of this doctrine and the rebel against it, but even as the rebel his premises are those of the doctrine.

In his and similar later doctrines, the looks of things are hypostatized as perceptions or percepts, and things are held to be inferred entities, posits, postulates or objects of belief. But as I have tried to show, things are constituted visibly through their appearances to an observer in depth perception, neither inferred nor postulated, but seen staying in position as we move about them, or moving and turning as we stand and look at them. The supposed inference or postulate is peculiar among inferences and postulates in

that no one can ever remember having made it. But everyone who sees, actually sees things in depth, and sees the places beyond them from which he could see their hidden sides.

In the Humean type of doctrine, the perception of sensation as given is in a peculiar sense a pure perception or sensation. Just as shape and size were nothing but shape and size, colour was nothing but colour. The qualities of colour apart from the colour itself, so to speak, were removed: coldness, warmth, harshness, richness, gaiety, mellowness, limpidity. All these values were theoretically absent from the colour sensation as given. Furthermore, though colour was always extended, it was never admitted that it always had a texture, for texture was tactual and had to be explained by association. Colour was colour and nothing else. Red could have no look but red. It could not be angry or fiery, nor advance as blue receded. Thus the hypostatized appearance or look did not even correspond to the look of things but was an abstraction from it, for fieriness of colour like elegance of shape corresponded to nothing in the external physical causes of the stimulus.

But everything that had been taken out of perception had to be somehow accounted for. Synaesthesia was ascribed to the mechanism of association and subsidiary unverifiable hypotheses invoked to accomplish this. Other aspects of perceptual experience were ascribed to a secondary mechanism, the mechanism of pain, pleasure and the passions, which external sensation brought into play. Apart from bodily pain however, pain and pleasure were not sensations; sensations were pleasant or painful but pleasure and pain were not sensations. What could they be? The answer was qualities or properties of sensations. But all qualities or properties of anything were sensations or reducible to sensations. Pleasure and pain never acquired any proper place or status in

the doctrine nor could they even be caused, for only the sensations or passions were caused and pleasure and pain were not sensations or passions.

For actual experience and the analysis of it had been substituted a hypothetical system which would at best explain how it arose originally, though this could never be verified. But Hume, like so many of his successors, purports to be describing our actual experience, and of course he often does so - when he forgets his system or continues to say what he wants to say in spite of it. He happily ignores it when need be. As a moraliste, Hume makes his often acute observations in the ordinary language. They thus stand and fall quite independently of his theory of the passions. The illustrations of the mechanism of sympathy are a case in point; they may stand though one reject the mechanism.

The passions in Hume's theory arise from the sensations, which must come first: percept before affect, as in some versions of the modern stimulus-response theory. There is no basis in experience for this assertion of the causal priority of the percept. The examination of experience reveals something quite different; that perception is affective through and through and all the time.

Chapter 9

AFFECTIVITY AND VALUE

To see is to look at something, to make it the figure in its contextual background. One notices, looks at, one thing or group of things rather than another; or one thing catches one's attention rather than another. Why? Why does one look at one thing rather than another? Why does something catch one's attention? To say it is interesting is to say one is interested, at least for the moment. What is bizarre, striking, lovely, anomalous, huge or ugly, for example, is interesting. One is interested, struck, arrested, puzzled, melted, frozen, bewildered, repelled, attracted, at ease or on edge. But there is no ready-made or standard epithet for most of the things which are interesting or for the ways in which one is interested. One's long-term interests of course lead one to notice some things rather than others, but the sense of "interest" I am after is the more general one, which also includes casual, short-term, idle and momentary interest.

Bangs and flashes force one's attention willy-nilly, producing the "startle effect" as it is called. So also a push in the back or a bang on the head produce effects on us, or even someone waving a hand in front of our face. In these cases we are acted upon rather than acting. They are to looking and listening as being thrown is to leaping. But looking, listening and touching are exploratory and selective. What I want to suggest is that selectivity is affectivity and its correlate is value. My aim is limited to making a few essential points about the passions, emotions, feelings and senti-



ments and about values; any treatment in my revised terms of the moral values with which Hume is largely concerned is beyond the scope of this work.

Selection is preferential, visually as in other ways. What we notice is what is noticeable, what is worth a look. Sometimes, as in a dentist's waiting room, one is not looking for anything in particular; one's eye lights on one thing and another - perhaps a picture, a calendar, or a chair is curious or intriguing, but not the wall-paper or the carpet or curtains. At other times, one wants to find out something and only what is relevant to that is of interest. Scenes and situations are perceived in terms of our purposes and preoccupations and desires.

I use the terms "affective" and "affectivity" rather than "emotion", "passion" and "feeling", because they include not only the meanings of these commoner words but also the continual ebb and flow of one's curiosity, interest, delight, desire, satisfaction, dissatisfaction, irritation and so on. When one is calmly at work - writing, say - there is no range of standard terms for the phases of the ebb and flow. It may be mild or it may be more strenuous. When, for example, one is having to struggle to express an argument, one feels tension, hope, disgust, despair. But when one is moving smoothly on, one is not in the ordinary sense feeling emotions, but one is calmly pleased with the way it is going, and this undisturbed feeling of progress, achievement is no less affective. The way we apprehend the present stage of a task as incomplete, muffed, muddled, or coming along, shaping up, lightening, is the way we feel about it, the way it looks to us, and of course a task is only a task to us, to someone, to a potential doer. The requiredness as we apprehend it is the correlate of our project and they cannot be separated. Our situation is

the way we see it; it is a situation only for us, ordered and organised in relation to our desires, projects, and interests with potentialities and promising features, obstacles and barriers. It is in terms of our being in the world as an embodied consciousness that feeling, emotion or affectivity have to be understood.

Though Hume seems to start from the view that there is a definite range of distinctive, nameable passions, he realises in effect that these are only the more striking and overt phases of affectivity. He does suppose that the passions are caused by perceptions and indeed that they are themselves secondary perceptions. I wish to maintain that perception - in my sense: hearing, touching and seeing - is affective in the first place, through and through, and that the correlate of affectivity is value, at the perceptual as well as at other, or "higher", levels. Hume supposes that the passion is an observable, identifiable occurrence, since it is a sensation or impression; though it only occurs in certain circumstances it would be what it is in any circumstances, its relation to other impressions being merely the relation of external association. But no such passion "itself" can be found. Feeling is someone's feeling about something in a situation; it is inseparable from what may be expressed as a value predicate of the object. But it is distinguishable, as the consciousness of the object is to be distinguished from the object of consciousness.

If the passion "itself" is not to be found, how do we know we are angry, for example, or delighted or afraid or uneasy? The answer sometimes given is that we know this in the same way as we know that anyone else is angry, or delighted or afraid or uneasy - by observing the behaviour and symptoms which

together constitute and define these different emotions. Though this view is finally untenable, the reasons which have led to its adoption are important and interesting. There are two main reasons.

In the first place, to know that one is angry, for example, to recognise it as anger, is to know the meaning of the word, to have a concept of anger, and to know when to use it. We learn the meaning of "anger" not simply from being angry but from being told we are angry or in a temper, from seeing others whom we are told are angry, and from the reactions of others to our anger. Much the same goes for all the other passions - and for dispositions, propensities and character traits. In the second place, we can be angry without knowing it and others can know it long before we do - we may deny it angrily. To be angry is not to know one is angry, and the same goes for all the passions, emotions and feelings. Feeling is not to be identified with recognising, realising, knowing, or being aware of what we feel.

It is natural therefore to conclude that we recognise our own anger in the same way, or very nearly, as we recognise the anger of others; by the observable symptoms and behaviour. On this view, all that is missing in Hume's account is a description of the symptoms and behaviour in addition to what he gives an account of - the characteristic circumstances in which they occur. There would be no question of the passion "itself" as a further component. Anger would be a name for a certain range of observable symptoms and behaviour. It would be reducible to overt, observable happenings. To know someone was angry would be to observe his flush or pallor, his trembling, glaring, shouting in a certain tone, to which might be added some physiological facts. To know that one was oneself angry would likewise be to observe these phenomena or some of them. Anger would thus be a state of a certain kind of object, the

kind known as a person or, paradoxically, a subject.

In behaviourist descriptions, the observer or describer is left out of account. If he were not, he would not be observing but observed. But since the assumption is that only what is observed, objects, can be meaningfully spoken of or described, there are in effect no subjects but only objects, no selves but only others, no observers but only what is observed. Thus one knows one is angry in the same way as one knows others are angry. This has, of course to be regarded as a loose way of talking; one should not say "one knows", one should say: Subject A is observed to be angry by the same criteria as Subjects B, C, D, etc. "Subject" in this context means "object" - what is observed - though it seems to be applied only to human objects, not to rats or monkeys.

It is quite important to realise that this is not Hume's view of the matter, nor can his view be revised at all plausibly in this direction. For Hume, the passion itself was not the situation or the circumstances in which it occurred, nor yet the externally observable behaviour and symptoms (which would of course for Hume be reducible to impressions of sensation.) And to this extent, I think Hume was right: to know what anger is, what it means to be angry, one must be angry or have been angry, just as, to know what it means to see, one must see or have seen. Anger belongs to experience, consciousness, subjectivity. It is not a characteristic or reducible to characteristics of any observed object whatsoever, or, for example, to the chemical state of the bloodstream and similar criteria.

How then is it possible that, on the one hand, one may not know one is angry, and on the other, that one can tell when other people are angry? To

to be angry at someone for his conduct is to see him or think of him as mean, or disgraceful, or disobliging, or dishonest, or heartless, or irresponsible or infuriating. It is to see or think of him angrily. We are not seeing or thinking and being angry. Our seeing and thinking is angry, or our anger is the way we see or think of the odious, outrageous object of our anger. To be angry at is to be conscious of - to see, imagine, think of, have in mind - in a certain way. We may not know we are angry, may not realise or recognise our anger, because our attention is absorbed in the infuriating object of our anger. The sense in which we may be said not to know we are angry is the sense in which we may be said not to know we are seeing it or thinking of it: the consciousness of the object is in this case non-reflexive. But as our seeing it is implicit in its present visibility, so is our anger in its infuriatingness and all the implicitly anger-making predicates we might ascribe to it. But we can be reflexively aware of seeing someone or something and of being angry at him. We recognise we would love to clout him, but we are observing, looking at, perceiving only him; we cannot perceive our perceiving, nor perceive our desire to clout him. But we know we do perceive him and that we have a strong desire to clout him. In this sense of "know", knowing is not objective or based on observation of the patient's symptoms. The object of our anger remains the object, even as we become aware of our anger, or our feeling and attitude towards him.

But as we see with our eyes, bodily from where we are; so we are also bodily angry. We glare, clench our teeth and our fists perhaps, go hot or cold, shout, adopt a bodily attitude. When we become aware of this, we are still not perceiving or observing as we might someone else's clenched fists and much more. For we are our body: we know our fists are clenched, that

we are glaring furiously, that our cheeks are hot, without any observation of fists, eyes, or cheeks. And I need hardly repeat that we are not aware of any physiological effect or occurrence, though if we know some physiology we will know that such effects are in operation.

Anger is not voluntary: that is why it is called a passion, or used to be called a passion. But we live it, assume it, suffer it, act it out, or suppress it. It is not a third person, objective process or series of occurrences. We can be as it were possessed, but we let ourselves be, let ourselves go, let it rip. To give it rein, to throw a fit, represents a choice of conduct; we do not lose control, we abandon ourselves to it, act it out. If we were not reflexively aware of being angry, the notions of self-control and restraint or lack of them would be meaningless. To act calmly, unclench the fists, breathe more deeply is already to be less angry. To do otherwise is to be angrier - to work oneself up.

Because we are bodily angry, or glad, sad, merry, etc., and may not know it, James's paradox may seem persuasive: we are sad because we weep or merry because we laugh. The ordinary view regards the feeling as prior to the expression; James's view reverses the order and it arises out of his dualism.

For James, until he launched his attack on the concept of consciousness, the body was simply the organism, the object of physiology, and a bodily event was simply a physiological event. One's own bodily sensations and feelings were all events in consciousness, causally connected with physiological occurrences and processes. A self or subject, that is to say, was not a body. Hence weeping could happen and make us feel sad.

But our experience as I have tried to argue, is essentially as embodied



subjects. We are embodied, or if you like we are our bodies. In experience, feeling may precede expression or they may be simultaneous, but both are bodily. To weep is to be sad, to assume one's sadness, not to snap out of it, to surrender to tears, to indulge one's feeling: again it is a choice of conduct. If we don't want to, we don't need to. Every feeling has its bodily expression, its expression in conduct, its range of possible developments. Feeling and expression are best conceived as matter and form: they are not separable, for the matter is expressed in the form, as what we mean is in the words we use and has no separate existence. Willy-nilly, we express our feelings and attitudes in posture, gesture, and face, if not in words. Not to express them is to suppress them.

One of the reasons most often advanced for a behaviourist account of how one knows one is angry or joyful is simply that sometimes one is, but does not know it, while others do know it. This view is, I think, reinforced by saying that one is then unconsciously angry or unconscious of one's anger. To be consciously angry is to realise one is angry, to be unconsciously angry is not to realise it. But it does not follow from this English idiom that we know we are angry from objective symptoms and behaviour or that anger is primarily a name for an observable state of a subject or for a kind of behaviour. Tacitly assumed in this kind of account is the disembodied observer who is not what is observed - the signs, symptoms and behaviour - but who apprehends and interprets the bodily sensations and manifest movements, identifying empirically and inductively the state of anger in "subjects" which are more properly called objects.

The ghost that haunts this and similar views is the disembodied epistemological subject; anger is reduced to events in the third person. Anger is not

a feeling, a passion - though no doubt there are feelings and sensations - but an objective, factual state of an object. Just as you tell that water is boiling by the bubbles and steam, so you tell that the kind of thing called a person is angry by his red face, loud voice, violent gestures and glaring eyes, etc., and these and other symptoms are all that anger is. That is what "anger" means. Anger is simply a compendious way of referring to a collection of associated phenomena. One may, though one need not, add the physiological description, as one might add the physical in the case of the water. Thus when I say I am angry I mean that this thing is in a publicly observable state.

On this view no one would actually feel angry and nothing would be experienced as infuriating. Subjectively one could never actually be angry or at least one could never know it. To know it, one would have to observe the thing, the object, the so-called self.

The common English idiom in which one is said to be consciously or unconsciously angry, conscious or unconscious of one's anger, by no means implies such a view. It is another way of making the distinction between realising and not realising that one is angry. But one does not observe the signs and identify them collectively as constituting anger. We become reflexively aware of being angry, as we become reflexively aware of seeing or hearing or thinking. As one can be said to be unconsciously angry, so one could be said to be unconsciously seeing something, or hearing or thinking. Most seeing is in this sense unconscious, that is to say, we are not reflexively aware of seeing something. What is meant by consciousness in this context is the reflexive consciousness, or self-consciousness.

Non-reflexively, however, seeing is essentially conscious, a consciousness of something. And to be angry, is to be angrily conscious of, to experience angrily, to see angrily, think angrily, etc. Reflexion is explicitation, realisation, of one's experience or consciousness of something, of one's attitude, feelings, emotions, passions. Without it, these words would refer to nothing whatsoever. Reflexion or self-consciousness is perfectly normal and commonplace, not something that just phenomenologists go in for. But some accounts of it are certainly misleading.

It is often spoken of as a consciousness of being conscious, as if the being conscious were an object. But when we are, for example, reflexively aware of seeing something, if we were not effectively seeing something we could not be aware of seeing it. What we see does not cease to be the object, else we would not be seeing. We are aware of seeing just that thing, not nothing in particular. To be aware of its present visibility is to be aware of seeing it. The snare - one of many - into which one falls in talking about consciousness is that one ignores one's body. Bodily experience is not experience of a body as in, for example, the experience of seeing a table. One has to be a body to see a table. Bodily experience is the experience of being a body, of being embodied, incarnate. The reflexive consciousness or self-consciousness is not a consciousness of a pure, disembodied consciousness, but of an embodied incarnate consciousness. To be aware of seeing is to be aware of seeing with one's eyes, and of seeing that very thing over there and visible.

And similarly, to realise one is angry at someone is to become aware that one is tense, itching to clout him, glaring, exploding, and that one sees him as detestable, infuriating, and that, for example, one regards his expression as smug, evil and devious. One is aware, not just of him in a certain way,

but of the way in which one is aware of him, of one's own attitude and relation to him. One is a body and this awareness is of bodily experience, of the way one is regarding the object of one's anger. This awareness is reflexive. It is perhaps useful to illustrate the point about reflexive and non-reflexive bodily experience - or, if you like, conscious and unconscious bodily experience - in an example which has nothing to do with the emotions specially.

As I write, I am sitting with the pressure of the chair under me, arms on the table, feet on the floor. Most of the time, I am not, as they say, conscious of this. But it is implicit in what I am doing - writing this. At any moment, however, I can be conscious or reflexively aware of this, attending to the pressure, posture and movements I am making. Again, most of the time I am writing, I am not conscious of moving the pen over the paper - for I am thinking of what I am writing, what I want to say. But again at any moment I can be, and this is reflexive. Nor most of the time am I conscious of seeing the paper on which I write, for that would be distracting; I am of course seeing it and seeing what I write, but I am not reflexively aware of this. But at any moment I can be. Again, I am not conscious of drawing on my pipe (much less of breathing), nor of taking it in my hand and shifting it to the other side of my mouth. But again, I can be.

Now the English idiom I have referred to is a bit misleading. For while it is sometimes said, for example, of someone who is obviously in a rage that he is unconsciously angry; it is never said of anyone absorbed in a book that he is unconsciously holding the book at a suitable distance from his eyes or that he is unconsciously sitting in his chair, or of someone absorbed in writing

that he is unconsciously pushing the pen across the paper. I contend that this idiom would be as appropriate in the one case as in the other. In the terms which I think are less confusing, reading and writing or standing are all conscious activities but not necessarily reflexively conscious. And similarly for the feelings, emotions, passions, and attitudes - they are conscious but not necessarily reflexively conscious. Reflexion is not observation, at least not in the ordinary sense. It is only by being a body that one can observe anything from anywhere. To be aware of oneself is to be aware of the body one is. The only sense in which one can literally observe it is the sense in which one can see a certain amount of it - but no one is going to suggest that that is how we know what we feel.

One's body is in a sense a priori; being a body is the condition of experience of things and other people. One is a body and when one is angry at someone and regards him as infuriating, one is bodily angry. There is no more difficulty in being aware of this reflexively than there is in being aware of the pressure of the chair under one. One's anger is not a set of physiological facts: one is not physiological facts. But one is one's body and to be angry or joyful or merry is to be bodily angry or joyful or merry - how else should one grin or laugh? When you are overcome with hilarity or mirth, it is the mirth that shakes your body from stem to stern. If you had never been shaken with mirth you would never know what it was like, what mirth was. And so with anger and with all other emotions.

But all feeling and emotions and passions are ways in which one experiences situations, people and things, and what can be formulated as value predicates of these are the correlates of one's feelings - an awkward or trying or delightful situation, a boring person, a hideous object. When someone is scintillating,

aren't you alert, eager, hanging on his words? And when someone is tedious, don't you droop wearily? But it is bodily that you are alert or drooping, for you are not a disembodied mind. Naturally you are not taking notice of your attitude and feeling most of the time - your attention is devoted to the object. But there is no difficulty in taking notice and being reflexively aware of what you feel.

The next question is how we know what others feel. I have suggested that feeling and its expression are best conceived as matter and form, not as cause and effect. We express our feelings and attitudes in posture, gesture and face, if not in words. We know what others feel because we see their expressions, postures, gestures and conduct. As Ryle remarks, there is no "causal divination reinforced by weak analogical argument." We do not infer to the cause of the expression we see on people's faces when we want to know what they feel. The expression, the form, is the form of the matter. We, as it were, read their expressions. We do not infer from the words we see and hear what their meaning is: it is in the words as matter to form. When an expression is cryptic and we are puzzled, there is nothing to go by but the expression. When we cannot understand a sentence and try to interpret it, we are not inferring to its cause. Nor are we when we do not know what someone's expression or attitude means or portends. Having understood it, however, we may well have to infer why the person in question is angry or sulky or sad, that is, what he is angry or sulky or sad about.

One of Hume's most celebrated dicta is: "The minds of men are mirrors to one another". But he insists that "no passion of another discovers itself immediately to the mind". Passions are not expressed in people's faces or conduct, according to Hume, they are inferred from signs, the connection being



established by association. These external signs have no expression, no look, for they are simply complex impressions of sensation and nothing more. Hume's mechanism of sympathy cannot account for how we come to see an expression on a face. How does the expression get into the face?

This question is akin to a more elementary question which a sensationalist or datum doctrine of perception must answer: how do the other qualities get into a colour? For a colour datum according to such doctrines is nothing but colour - not nice or nasty, not warm or cold, not glaring or garish or mellow, nor full-bodied nor sickly, nor glowing nor bilious. It is so to speak pure colour, in a peculiar sense of "pure". But pure colour in this sense is never actually seen, never given in experience. The concept belongs to physical theories of colour, from which of course values and qualities other than the colour itself have to be excluded. In a doctrine such as Hume's, colour in this sense is identified with the datum of our experience of colour. Hume never addresses himself to this problem, nor so far as I know do any of his successors who hold sense-datum theories. In Hume's doctrine of sympathy, the idea of a passion, which occurs by association with such observed circumstances as would occasion it in our own experience, differs from the passion only in vivacity, and because others resemble us we in some measure feel their passion. But as a matter of fact we may read the anger in another's face without feeling angry in any degree at all, and we may do this even without knowing what he is angry about. What we feel ourselves is another matter entirely.

It remains to say a word about the projection theory of value - that values are projected on things by our feelings, or that values are projected feelings. If feelings are what I take them to be there is no sense in which they can possibly be projected on what the feeling is about. They are our feelings,

not the feelings of what we have in view or in mind. But, it may be said, the qualities and values of things might still be projected by our feelings. The difficulty is to know what precisely this could mean. Would we for example see a colour, have a feeling and project, say, mellowness on the colour, invest the colour with mellowness? Or would we see a girl, have a feeling, and project the prettiness on her, or invest her wiggle with seduction? There is no doubt about the feelings or about what the feelings are about. But we are asked to suppose that somehow or other - in what sense is impossible to determine - that the feeling is prior to the prettiness. The origins of this theory lie in the sensation or datum view of perception: what is given is colour, size and shape and nothing else. The hypostatized look of a thing or person is a look from which the values have been extracted.

But, as I have said, we see things the way we see them and they look the way they look. As an objectively determinable object, a girl is not pretty, for then she has no looks. Only measurements in various dimensions.

Chapter 10

THINGS IN THE WORLD

One of Hume's purposes in Parts 3 and 4 of Book I is to refute the doctrine of representative perception, to deny the double existence, representing and represented. Always at the back of his mind and sometimes in the forefront, however, is the physical and physiological theory which led to the doctrine of representative perception, the doctrine of sense-impressions - affections of the external sense organs, conveyed by the nerves and animal spirit, and causing conscious sensations in the mind. These, he asserts repeatedly, are known to us by consciousness as they really are. But his whole doctrine of the senses is founded on the theory and has no foundation in actual experience. The point may be illustrated in his accounts of taste and smell and of solidity.

If anyone says that he experiences a sound or smell as filling a room, Hume's reply is: you cannot, for these are impressions, arising from the senses, internal and perishing existences, and are in the mind. But probably realising the difficulty, he never asserts that the smell is in one's nose or the sound in one's ears. He prefers to assert that they are nowhere.

"... and I assert, that this is not only possible, but the greatest part of things do and must exist after this manner. An object may be said to be nowhere, when its parts are not so situated with respect to each other, as to form any figure or quantity; nor the whole with respect to other bodies so as to answer to our notions of contiguity or distance. Now this is evidently the case with all our perceptions and objects, except those of sight and feeling. A moral reflection cannot be plac'd on the right or on the left hand of a passion,

nor can a smell or a sound be either of a circular or a square figure. These objects and perceptions, so far from requiring any particular place, are absolutely incompatible with it, and even the imagination cannot attribute it to them... 'Twill not now be necessary to prove, that those perceptions, which are simple, and exist nowhere, are incapable of any conjunction in place with matter or body, which is extended and divisible; since 'tis impossible to found a relation but on some common quality.... Thus supposing we consider a fig at one end of a table, and an olive at the other, 'tis evident, that in forming the complete ideas of these substances, one of the most obvious is that of their different relishes; and 'tis as evident, that we incorporate and conjoin these qualities with such as are colour'd and tangible. The bitter taste of the one, and sweet of the other are supposed to lie in the very visible body, and to be separated from each other by the whole length of the table. This is so notable and so natural an illusion, that it may be proper to consider the principles, from which it is derived." (Treatise, P.235).

Hume argues that this conjunction in place of the taste, smell and colour is a relation added by the mind to supplement the relation of contiguity in the time of their appearance. But there is no more reason to say the taste is nowhere than to say the colour is nowhere. Taste is not colour, but the parallel between them holds to this extent that just as you do not see the colour of the fig when you are not looking at it, so you do not feel or taste the savour of the fig when you are not eating it. Hume's rhetorical question whether the taste is in every part of the fig or only in some, simply establishes what we all know, that taste is different from colour, not that the taste is not the taste of the fig as the colour is the colour of the fig. You taste the

fig in your mouth: it has to be there for you to taste it. When it is in your mouth you cannot see it, but Hume would not argue that then the taste is somewhere but the colour nowhere. It would, however, be just as plausible to do so.

Hume simply forgets that it is only by virtue of one's body that one has any experience of figs at all, that in order to perceive anything anywhere one has to be somewhere bodily oneself. His references to the senses are entirely unintelligible apart from the body, which is itself extended and in depth and is so experienced. But his argument depends on the disembodiment of <sup>the</sup> senses.

In his argument on the primary and secondary qualities in Book I, Pt. 4, Sec. 4, Hume's main point is that the primary cannot be apprehended without the secondary. But it is in this section that the primacy of the visual for Hume becomes explicit, a primacy which is of fundamental importance in his analysis of causality. He argues that we can have no idea of solidity independently of a visible extension on the ground that the impressions of touch are simple impressions, and the feeling is quite different from the solidity.

This argument is close to the one concerning taste, and Hume might say equally well that the sensation of touch was nowhere. Yet to make this point he takes the body for granted: "An object, that presses upon any of our members, meets with resistance; and that resistance, by the motion it gives to the nerves and animal spirits, conveys a certain sensation to the mind; but it does not follow, that the sensation, motion, and resistance are any ways resembling." (Treatise, P.230). His argument is of course directed against the standard theory. But he is entirely the victim of it, and cursorily rejects the experience of feeling something, touching something, exploring something

with the hand, pressing, grasping, etc. in favour of what really, according to the theory, happens - sensations in the mind, nowhere.

He is to explain how we believe in bodies on the basis of a doctrine which would be inconceivable without bodies, notably the human body and sense organs, and which requires him to regard actual experience as somehow illusory, yet at the same time to assert bravely that of what we are most intimately conscious we cannot be mistaken - impressions. If Hume had taken Berkeley seriously, he would have realised that the body, the organism, the nerves and animal spirits are in the same boat as the other alleged external objects: they too have to be mere perceptions and it cannot be as a result of their independent operation that we have perceptions, for that would be to accept the theory of the double existence, representing and represented, the perceptions and the real physical body.

Hume recognises the difficulty at various points, but he does not overcome it, for he continues to refer to the senses and sense organs, directly and indirectly, though these expressions have no meaning apart from eyes and ears and hands and skin, from seeing, hearing, touching and moving. The "experiments" whereby he proves that our perceptions are "not possest of any distinct or independent existence" are experiments with bodies: "When we press one eye with a finger, we immediately perceive all the objects to become double..." (Treatise, P.210-211) Are the finger and the eye perceptions? Not for the moment. They are what we perceive the objects (or perceptions) with, parts of the body in fact. At other times, the finger and the eye and all the rest of the body are mere perceptions too. But they are nevertheless perceived with "the senses.": "Properly speaking, 'tis not our body we perceive... but certain impressions, which enter by the senses..." (Treatise, P.191). Even



as Hume tries to reduce the body to impressions "on the same footing" with any other impression, there have to be senses and sense organs, a real body, for there to be any impressions at all, and this requires the double existence, representing and represented. Though his every argument that the immediate object of consciousness is an impression is derived from a consideration of the body, Hume insists all the more strongly that the impressions are "known to us by consciousness"; what we call the body therefore can only consist of such impressions. What we are immediately aware of is what, according to the physiological theory, we must be aware of; but if so, the body itself must be so reducible.

The theory is thus circular: the doctrine of impressions is the outcome of a study of the body, but the body is itself reducible to impressions. The "we" to whom the impressions "must necessarily appear in every particular what they are, and be what they appear," is a disembodied consciousness; that is all "we" can be if the body be reduced to "our" perceptions. And so it is in most of Hume's frequent references to the mind or consciousness and its activities. But he never makes this explicit and falls back upon embodiment continually without realising it. How can a disembodied mind, which can itself be nowhere, have a "propensity to spread itself on external objects" as his doctrine of causality requires? How can an impression be "an internal and perishing existence"? Internal or external to what? There is only one answer: the body.

It is the disembodied mind, however, which Hume attempts to be quit of in his celebrated account of personal identity. The mind or self is composed of perceptions and "identity is nothing really belonging to these different per-

ceptions, and uniting them together; but is merely a quality, which we attribute to them, because of the union of their ideas in the imagination, when we reflect upon them." (Treatise, P.260). Who are the "we" who reflect upon them and what is the "imagination"? There is only one answer: the disembodied consciousness. Again, as in the case of the body, Hume tries to have it both ways, assuming and denying; we are conscious of our perceptions, perceptions are in the mind or imagination, but the mind is nothing but perceptions; it is composed of perceptions.

His account of the self follows from the nature of the perception as he conceives it. To recapitulate: firstly, the perception is both object and consciousness, but secondly, it is itself an object of consciousness. Firstly, the mind is composed of perceptions, but secondly, perceptions are united in the mind or imagination, and "we" reflect upon them. Hume's account of relations requires the latter view: they are known by intuition or comparison, but it is not the terms of the relation which intuit or compare.

Throughout Book I, Hume's concrete examples all refer to things, not perceptions. Now things, according to Hume's analysis in Part IV, are fictitious identities of the imagination. In Husserlian terms, they are meant or intended unities or identities, noemata. Either this is an analysis of what the vulgar mean by a thing or it is pointless. What Hume is indeed accounting for is the distinction, for example, between the table and my seeing the table from different angles yesterday, today and tomorrow, which is the vulgar distinction. The table is the identity, the seeings of it are not. For the vulgar, the table is the object, not the seeing or imagining or thinking of. Hume of course knows this: "When we are absent from it, we say it still exists, but that we do not feel it, we do not see it." (Treatise, P.207). What he means

by a perception is not the thing which we suppose to exist independently of our seeing or feeling it. Yet Hume insists that the vulgar take their perceptions to be their only objects. This is simply not so. Perceptions correspond to the different appearances of things, the different views one has of them, and Hume in effect makes this very point in his reference to the "seeming encrease and diminution of objects, according to their distance; by the apparent alterations in their figure; by the changes in their colour and other qualities from our sickness and distempers; and by an infinite number of other experiments of the same kind; from all which we learn, that our sensible perceptions are not possest of any distinct or independent existence." (Treatise, P.211). The point Hume is making is amply made in the vulgar parlance; it is quite simply the distinction between the thing and the way I see it now from here. To say that the vulgar take their perceptions to be their only objects is on the face of it to say that the vulgar do not make the distinction. But they do. The thing that I see now from here can be seen from other places, in other lights and circumstances - it has other sides. That is what we mean by a table or chair or hat or shoe: that sort of thing.

What leads Hume to give his peculiar and misleading account of the vulgar consciousness? He is fighting on two fronts. He wants to give a critique of the vulgar consciousness, but he is intent on refuting the doctrine of representative perception. In rejecting the double existence, however, it is not the representation he rejects but what it represents - the real physical object. Perceptions are intra-mental entities, and strictly internal and perishing existences. But in his polemic against the philosophical view, Hume treats them as representations, simulacra of the real thing, though they rep-

resent nothing and there is no real thing. Perceptions are all there is, or at least all we can know there is. Hence he is led into saying that the vulgar take their perceptions to be their only objects. He is himself the victim of the philosophical view and takes his only objects to be perceptions. What the vulgar take to be objects - things - can only on his view be perceptions.

"That I may avoid all ambiguity and confusion on this head, I shall observe, that I here account for the opinions and beliefs of the vulgar with regard to the existence of body; and therefore must entirely conform myself to their manner of thinking and of expressing themselves. Now we have already observ'd, that however philosophers may distinguish betwixt the objects and perceptions of the senses; which they suppose co-existent and resembling; yet this is a distinction, which is not comprehended by the generality of mankind, who as they perceive only one being, can never assent to the opinion of a double existence and representation. Those very sensations, which enter by the eye or ear, are with them the true objects, nor can they readily conceive that this pen or paper, which is immediately perceiv'd, represents another, which is different from, but resembling it. In order, therefore, to accommodate myself to their notions, I shall at first suppose; that there is only a single existence, which I shall call indifferently object or perception, according as it shall seem best to suit my purpose, understanding by both of them what any common man means by a hat, or shoe, or stone, or any other impression, convey'd to him by his senses. I shall be sure to give warning, when I return to a more philosophical way of speaking and thinking." (Treatise, P.202).

Hume has of course repeatedly followed the terminology which he here

somewhat portentously announces as conforming to the vulgar manner. The ambiguity and confusion which he tries to avoid is simply made worse. What any common man means by a hat or shoe is not what Hume means by an impression, those very sensations which enter by the eye or ear. If that were so, "impression" and "thing" would be synonyms. But a thing is not the seeing of it. It need not be seen to be: it is not an internal and perishing existence. To call the single existence indifferently object or perception is not to accommodate himself to the vulgar belief at all: it is simply to confuse the issue. What corresponds to a perception in the vulgar parlance is not the thing, but the way the thing looks to me here and now, the look of the thing; things can be seen from different places at different times in different lights; furthermore, they can be handled, explored, examined, submitted to test and experiment, and this is the most obvious sense in which they are independent - their peculiarities are discovered, not invented. But for Hume this is not a problem at all: the problem of independent existence is reduced to the problem of continued existence when they are unperceived. And this follows from his identification, foisted upon the vulgar, of perceptions and things.

"'Tis certain, that almost all mankind, and even philosophers themselves, for the greatest part of their lives, take their perceptions to be their only objects... 'Tis also certain, that this very perception or object is supposed to have a continu'd uninterrupted being, and neither to be annihilated by our absence, nor to be brought into existence by our presence. When we are absent from it, we say it still exists, but that we do not feel, we do not see it."  
(Treatise, P.207).

Hume's question is how a perception can exist unperceived, and his premise

is that what we see or perceive is a perception. A table, for example, is a perception. He is asking how we suppose that "the interruption in the appearance of a perception implies not necessarily an interruption in its existence." The confusion is only explicable if one bears in mind that he is attacking the representative theory, and that of the double existence he has retained the representation, the simulacrum-table in the mind. This he takes to be what is ordinarily meant by "the table", and since it is only a representation or perception one may speak of the interruption in the appearance of the perception just as one may talk of the interruption in the appearance of the table.

He ignores the fact that what we call a table is in depth while what he calls a perception is two-dimensional, flat. The perception-table would be more like a picture of a table. But he just forgets about this during his discussion of the broken appearances and how we unite them. United or not, they would still all be flat, for Hume never explains how a third dimension gets into the picture. The alleged perplexity arising from the broken appearances is entirely Hume's. His problem is not for example, how I believe that the book which I see continues to exist when I am not looking at it, but in effect how I believe an appearance to exist when it is not appearing, not an appearance, to which the vulgar, and only, answer is: I don't. But this is what he makes out that the vulgar do believe.

Even his account of the philosophical view is obscured thereby. By way of correcting the vulgar opinion, he remarks "that all our perceptions are dependent on our organs... from all which we learn, that our sensible perceptions are not possess of any distinct or independent existence." (P.211). But this is the vulgar opinion: it amounts to saying that we do not see things when we are not looking at them, i.e., when they do not appear, and that they look different at



different times. He continues: "The natural consequences of this reasoning shou'd be, that our perceptions have no more a continu'd than an independent existence; and indeed philosophers have so far run into this opinion, that they change their system, and distinguish, (as we shall do for the future) betwixt perceptions and objects, of which the former are supposed to be interrupted, and perishing, and different at every return; the latter to be uninterrupted, and to preserve a continu'd existence and identity." What Hume is here describing is *prima facie* more like the vulgar view which makes the distinction between the table which has a continued existence and identity, and my seeing the table at different times and in different ways, and which is embodied in the very language. Having radically misrepresented the vulgar view Hume attributes something very like it to the learned.

All right, it may be said, Hume has been careless in his exposition, but after all he does give an account of the vulgar, natural belief in the independent continuing existence of things. In the end, the thing - hat, shoe or stone - is the identity, the fiction of the imagination. What he is accounting for in the end is the vulgar belief, and is it not a plausible account?

It is plausible certainly in the sense that we do all believe in the continuing independent existence of things. But I see no reason to suppose that Hume has been careless in his exposition in any material respect. The confusion about what a perception is, the ambiguity of the concept, is central to his whole doctrine, and forces him to say the conflicting and contradictory things he does say. His account of the belief in the world and all the continuing things in it is inseparable from this confusion. For Hume, we arrive

at the belief through the experience of contradiction and perplexity at the broken appearances and seek relief in the fiction from our uneasiness at the conflict between the identity of the resembling perceptions and the interruption of the appearance. Hume is forced into this fairy story by his premises which are derived entirely from the learned doctrine that the immediate objects of the mind are its own representations or perceptions. This masquerades as an account of our actual experience, and he insists repeatedly that these perceptions are known as such by consciousness.

An account of experience must take it as it is, not as one might suppose on the basis of a physical or physiological doctrine that it must be, or must originally be. We have no experience except as embodied beings. The belief in the continued existence of things would hardly be possible for beings which did not have experience of things external to and independent of themselves, which they could approach and examine and discover more and more about: what one discovers in this way is experienced as being there already - we don't invent it. Again, I could not believe that there is a wall behind my back if I had no back, nor that there are things elsewhere if I were not here, that is to say if I were not a body. Nor could I believe that things exist unperceived if I did not see them in depth, for to see something in depth is to see it as having another unseen side which I could see from a vantage point beyond, for I can also move, and I can see where I could move to. An embodied being is always somewhere, and where he is is identified only in relation to where he has been, will be or could be, to other places where there are other things. To say I am here and now is to say there is a world in space and time. When I move to another place it would not be another place if there were not a place I had left.

It never occurred to Hume and it has occurred to few if any of the commentators that so far as perceptions are concerned some of the commonest adverbs and prepositions and place words would be unintelligible: up, down, over, under, behind, before, left, right, top, bottom. All these words could have meaning only for an embodied being, situated and oriented in the world. For a disembodied consciousness its perceptions could not have a top or bottom, a left side or a right side - these expressions would be meaningless. This escapes notice only because Hume secretly supposes that the disembodied consciousness sees, i.e., that it is embodied, as his inconsequent references to the internal and external show, as well as his references to the senses.

Again and again, Hume's argument is plausible because he, and with him the reader, tacitly assumes what he has no right to assume. For example, he says: "To begin with the senses, 'tis evident these faculties are incapable of giving rise to the notion of the continued existence of their objects after they no longer appear to the senses. For that is a contradiction in terms, and supposes that the senses continue to operate, even after they have ceas'd all manner of operation." (Treatise, P.188). If one forgets that "object" here means "perception", one may easily fail to notice Hume's confusion of the object of the senses in the ordinary sense - the thing we see - and the perception or impression which results from the stimulation of the senses, and therefore suppose that Hume is merely saying that a thing is not seen when it is not seen, or that we do not see it when we do not see it. Hume insouciantly trades on the normal meaning of "object of the senses" and then produces an argument which identifies this with the perception. But the doctrine of perceptions as internal and perishing existences presupposes

the body, the external sense organs, the nerves and animal spirits. The only way to avoid the charge of circularity, of assuming the findings of a science of the body to explain the belief in bodies, is to assert as he does "that all sensations are felt by the mind, such as they really are."

When made explicit, his argument requires for example, that what is ordinarily described as seeing a table, should be known as it really is, that is, as a complex impression of sensation, in the flat and nowhere. He insists that what is really given, the immediate object, is the perception. But of course we do see tables and chairs and that sort of thing. So tables and chairs are perceptions. Having thus identified the alleged external object and the intramental entity, he has disposed of external and distinct existence, and his only problem is that of continuing existence to which independent existence is reduced:

"If our senses, therefore, suggest any idea of distinct existences, they must convey the impressions as those very existences by a kind of fallacy and illusion." (P.189)

When he comes to examine the question why we attribute a distinct and continued existence to some impressions and not to others and finds they have "a peculiar constancy", his examples are "mountains, and houses, and trees, which lie at present under my eye." They "change not upon account of any interruption in my seeing or perceiving them." All quite true, and the reader readily accepts this if he forgets that he is required to hold that what he sees are perceptions: that is the whole point of the argument. The same goes for the subsequent and celebrated passage in which Hume, seated in his chamber, describes the reflexions and reasonings occasioned by the entry

of a porter with a letter from a friend 200 leagues distant. (P.196) The reader may again very readily forget the point: things, the porter and all are perceptions. So is what would commonly be called Hume - the large man sitting in the chamber. The "I" of the narrative cannot strictly be anywhere, or if the "I" be nothing but the perceptions, it is also the porter, the letter, the friend, and everything else it would commonly be said to think of or imagine. In another passage of the same kind, (P.199) Hume ignores the paradox in his terms of talking of the perception of the sun or ocean, when the sun and ocean are perceptions, and reduces the question of the continued existence of the perceptions to the continued existence of the sun or ocean. The question is continuously begged: the world and the things in it are taken as premises of an argument which is supposed to show how we believe in things and a world continuously existing, when all we have is perceptions, internal and perishing existences.

Chapter 11

BODY AND CAUSALITY

"We may well ask, What causes induce us to believe in the existence of body? but 'tis in vain to ask, Whether there be body or not? That is a point which we must take for granted in all our reasonings." (Treatise, P.187).

Does Hume mean that we must take for granted the existence of body to account for our belief in it? Or does he simply mean that the question whether there be body or not is unanswerable, and the only question is how we come to believe there is body? The latter is the usual interpretation, borne out by his analysis of bodies as fictitious identities of the imagination. But I am not sure that this is all Hume means. The above quotation can be read as a recognition by Hume that his argument is circular, that he takes the existence of body for granted in giving a causal account of our belief in body. It seems to me clear that he does do this, and the question is whether he recognises what he is doing. His account of the belief in the causal relation is so flagrantly a causal account that he can hardly have failed to recognise it; this seems to me to enhance the possibility that he explicitly intends to assume the existence of body as well as causality in accounting for the belief in body.

The question is a fundamental one for the whole interpretation of Hume's philosophy. If he were taking body and causality for granted in accounting for the beliefs in body and necessary connection, his account would be simply a scientific account, which would leave the metaphysical and epistemological questions untouched. Now this tendency is inherent in his concept of human nature as a part of nature, and his Newtonian model of experiment and explan-



ation. On this interpretation and only on this interpretation can Hume be said to give a psychological account of the belief in body and causality. In any of its modern meanings, psychology is intra-mundane: it is concerned with given creatures, animal or human, in the world, and takes these creatures in the world and causality for granted. It is, or intends to be, a science. There are great difficulties in this view of psychology which I shall discuss later in connection with Ryle's "The Concept of Mind": the principal one concerns the reduction of subjectivity, experience, to objective, causal explanation. But my point for the moment is simply that if Hume's account is psychological in the modern meaning, it must be one which takes the world and causality for granted, and cannot be an account of the world and causality as constituted by belief and imagination without circularity.

It is largely useless to ask what sort of account Hume intends to give, for he makes no explicit distinction between science and philosophy. Natural, moral and mental philosophy are distinguished by their subject matters and the peculiar difficulties which these respectively present. But they all deal with aspects of nature. Hume does suggest that the science of human nature is somehow fundamental in his introduction: "'Tis evident, that all the sciences have a relation, greater or less, to human nature; and that however wide any of them may seem to run from it, they still return back by one passage or another." (P.xix) They "lie under the cognizance of men, and are judged of by their powers and faculties." But it is much more plausible to interpret this in modern terms as the assertion that psychology is the fundamental science than as an assertion that epistemology and moral philosophy are different in kind from any science.

Metaphysics for Hume was school metaphysics. Science, experiment, was the

thing. But the fictions of the imagination, as he called them, are the things that science in the first place is about - bodies. But Hume never makes this point, and never recognises that his science of man is not a science like the others, but a First Philosophy, no less than Aristotle's, and that he speaks truer than he knows when, in his attack on substance, he jokingly suggests that perceptions are substances. This is what for him they are - ~~τα ὄντα, οὐσία.~~ <sup>τα ὄντα, οὐσία.</sup>

In Hume's account of causality, as in his account of the belief in the existence of body, "object" means both "thing" and "perception". Now ex hypothesi, there is no intrinsic, causal or necessary connection between one impression or idea and another; each is as it is and as it appears, regardless of any other. The point about Hume's elaborate argument, however, is that the conclusion prescribed by the definition of impressions and ideas is applied to things. Furthermore, his account of the causal belief is a causal account. The causes of the causal belief are therefore either real causes, which could only be known by God, or they presuppose the causal belief, in which case his argument is circular.

If we take a bodily sensation as the type of an impression, which Hume invites us to do, it is evident that one sensation does not cause another sensation; nor does anyone suppose so. Tooth-decay causes toothache, but tooth-decay is not a sensation. A pin entering the skin causes a jab; the jab is a sensation but not the pin or the skin. Again, if we take as corresponding to what Hume means by a complex impression what I see as I see it from my window, or any particular thing - a house or a tree - the way I see it now, this view or appearance is not a cause or an effect of any other view. (On the causal theory of perception, of course, all the appearances

are effects, but none of them is the cause of any other.) One appearance or look of a thing does not cause another appearance or look; they can never be more than successive, contiguous, and constantly conjoined. Looks, appearances, perceptions are not things, but hypostatized entities. One billiard ball causes another to move, but the look of the one does not cause the look of the other: the terms of the causal relation are the balls, not the looks, that is to say the causal relation is asserted between two identities, fictions of the imagination in Hume's terms, not between two impressions or ideas.

An analysis of causality is condemned to futility if it does not take as examples what we do regard as cases of cause and effect. Hume again does what he accuses the vulgar of doing, confounding perceptions and objects. But his analysis can only be significant in so far as it is concerned with the motions, actions and reactions, and changes of things, for these are what we take to be causes and effects. Hume calls an effect "an object which begins to exist", and this expression reveals as clearly as anything his confusion: the object in this context is not what we call a thing, but a perception. When a stationary billiard ball begins to roll, a new perception begins to exist, in Hume's terms. He nevertheless treats the new perception as if it were the thing. This is essential to his whole argument.

Now most of his argument is concerned with causal inference, inference from what is observed to its cause or effect on the basis of past experience. It is very little concerned with observation and experience as such, and with what we do observe and experience. The reason for this is that Hume has settled that matter a priori: all we can ever really observe or experience

are contiguous and successive impressions. But he applies this dogma to bodies, things. "Motion in one body is regarded upon impulse as the cause of motion in another. When we consider these objects with the utmost attention, we find only that the one body approaches the other; and that the motion of it precedes that of the other; but without any sensible interval. 'Tis in vain to rack ourselves with farther thought and reflexion upon this subject. We can go no farther in considering this particular instance." (Treatise, P.76-7).

It is of course only if we take what is present to be a succession of impressions - which have paradoxically to be called visual - that we can go no farther. His argument requires one, though it is ostensibly about bodies, to be a purely visual observer, immobile, deaf, and preferably disembodied: that is the rule of the game. But there is no reason why we should play this artificial game.

There might be some point in it if Hume were really playing fair: but to play fair one must either stick to bodies or stick to perceptions. Hume has confused them and it is easy to show this. What is that word "impulse" doing in the passage quoted? It certainly applies to bodies. An impulse is a push; a push is the action of one thing on another and to say such action is causal is not to add anything. One must regard the phrase "upon impulse" as inadvertent on Hume's part. He means to deny that pushes can be observed, and to assert that only motion and change can be observed. But if I put my finger in front of a moving billiard ball or cannon ball I feel the ball pushing my finger and see what I feel. Hume or any sensationalist would instantly deny this: you cannot see what you feel. But in doing so he has to talk about sensations and impressions, not about things, not about

billiard balls or cannon balls. Indeed one cannot properly talk about seeing or feeling, though one must; it is done with the words "visual" and "tactual". To insist with the sensationalist that I cannot see what I feel - the push of the ball - is to say that I cannot feel with the hand that I see the billiard ball that I also see. Billiard balls and in general bodies are seen with one's eyes and felt with one's hands. What sort of billiard ball would it be that one could not both see and touch and be touched by? A Humean billiard ball, not really a billiard ball but a visual perception. A perception cannot give a push: there is absolutely no need for Hume to argue that point. But when he invites the reader to "consider these objects with the utmost attention" or "in themselves", what he means is "as perceptions."

Now pushes are causes, though it does not add anything to what we experience as a push to call it a cause. If I put my finger in front of the moving billiard ball, letting it dangle, I feel the push and it moves the finger: I feel it moving my finger, which is to say, causing my finger to move. To say it causes my finger to move is to say no more than that it moves my finger, and this is a matter of actual direct experience. Similarly when I push it, or pick it up and roll it, there is no point in saying I cause it to move, for that is merely a less explicit way of saying I push it or roll it. Passive and active pushes are just as much matters of experience as visible movements. All our experience is the experience of an embodied being; there are not two or three or more - a seeing one, a touching one, and a moving one, but one embodied being which sees, touches and moves. Thus I see the push as well as feel it, just as I see the roughness of a surface as well as the colour, or grasp the very thing which I see. We need not "rack ourselves" to know that

we observe not merely two movements when one billiard ball rolls up to another, but the one hitting, pushing, impelling the other, which, if one wants to use the otiose word "cause", means causing the other to move. There is no question of an occult cause. Pushes and pulls are matters of direct experience, just like colours. There ~~is~~ nothing occult about being jostled on a crowded bus or being dragged by a child towards the sweet shop; one actually feels the push or the pull. Similarly one has direct experience of strength, force, power, resistance, weight in lifting, laying, hoisting, throwing and swinging things. One knows what force and power are by shoving and being shoved, just as one knows what colour is by seeing colours.

One does not experience one's own body as a thing, except to some extent when one contemplates it - for example, one's hand lying on the table. Even then, if one moves a finger it is only imperfectly a thing or object, for I, who see it, am moving (it), as I might move my eyes to see it. But apart from the occasions when I contemplate it in this way, it is entirely me, a subject not an object. It is by being a body that I have any experience of things, events, processes, phenomena. As a doer engaged in various tasks, my arms and hands are not things among other things but the power I have to reach, touch, grasp and manipulate things and are so experienced - non-thetically, as Sartre would say. They are not themselves things which one manipulates or grasps or moves or touches - for it is with them that one grasps, etc. To touch one's own hand is to touch it with one's other hand, and though normally touching and being touched are just as different from each other as are pushing and being pushed, in this case the experience is peculiar and ambiguous. Similarly, in action, one's legs are experienced as the power



to get at, near, round about, over or away from things.

One does not move one's body; one moves bodily; movement is bodily movement. To move anything one must be a body, an embodied subject, and as such lift or heave or push or pull it. The one body one cannot lift or heave or push or pull is one's own, for even in climbing a rope or hoisting oneself on to a high wall it is as a body that one is pulling or hoisting. One has to say one lifts one's arm and use many similar expressions in order to specify what movement one is making. But it is easy to ignore the difference between lifting one's arm and lifting a hammer, say. One lifts the hammer with one's hand and arm, but one doesn't lift one's arm with anything, for it is a part of oneself, the embodied subject.

Hume's discussion of bodily movement in the appendix (P.632) is founded on the distinction between a volition and a movement of the body. He insists that "the actions of the mind are, in this respect, the same with those of matter. We perceive only their constant conjunction; nor can we ever reason beyond it. No internal impression has an apparent energy, more than external objects have. Since, therefore, matter is confess'd by philosophers to operate by an unknown force, we shou'd in vain hope to attain an idea of force by consulting our own minds." To consult one's own mind in this context can only be to consult a disembodied mind, for Hume's argument is based straightforwardly on the mind-matter dualism; the body is matter and there is therefore no question of consulting one's experience as an embodied being - the experience of being a body - to attain the idea of force. Voluntary movement is held to consist in a mental volition followed by a movement of matter. But this is a theoretical construct required by dualist theory, not an analysis of

the experience of doing and acting, in which the volition is not identifiable but pressure, resistance and force are. As Ryle has argued, to my mind conclusively, volitions belong to the theory of the ghost in the machine.

In the "Enquiry", Hume discusses the question at greater length, but is prevented by his preconceptions from recognising the importance of the "animal nisus", as he calls it. This "though it can afford no accurate precise idea of power, enters very much into that vulgar, inaccurate idea, which is form'd of it." (Enquiry, P.67). This point is consigned to a footnote, though one might have supposed that the vulgar idea of power was the very one, if not the only one, whose origin it was important to identify. But Hume's concern is causal inference and necessary connexion and he of course identifies power and necessary connexion.

Having found that external objects give us no idea of power or necessary connexion, "let us see", he says, "whether this idea be derived from reflection on the operations of our own minds, and be copied from any internal impression. It may be said, that we are every moment conscious of internal power; while we feel, that, by the simple command of our will, we can move the organs of our body, or direct the faculties of our mind. An act of volition produces motion in our limbs, or raises a new idea in our imagination. This influence of the will we know by consciousness... But the means, by which this is effected; the energy by which the will performs so extraordinary an operation; of this we are so far from being immediately conscious, that it must for ever escape our most diligent enquiry." (Enquiry, P.64-65).

The terms in which Hume puts the problem are again those of the dualist theory of the interaction of soul and body, the body being the particular bit of matter on which the soul acts. The suggestion that we are every moment

conscious of internal power, he interprets as meaning that we are conscious of the power of the mind or will, for embodied experience, the experience of being a body, is excluded from consideration. Just as my hand moves the pen, so my volitions move my hand; the connection is equally mysterious. Volitions are the "occult inner thrusts" of which Ryle speaks, like the thrust of my hand on a lever, except that they are unobservable. Hume takes them for granted, as he does the theory to which they belong, but not the actual experience of being a body. Hence he cites the case of a man struck with palsy who tries to move his limbs but cannot, and argues from this that neither in his case nor in the normal case "are we ever conscious of power". "Consciousness," he says, "never deceives."

But the whole passage is based on the assumption that we do not really have bodily experience, that our experience is that of pure minds associated with things which are mere things we can "command", but not really us. I don't know about the palsy, but what one experiences when one is too weak to move is weakness, bodily weakness; one tries to stand up but can't, but the trying is not the act of a disembodied mind; one tries bodily. This sort of experience is important for understanding what is meant by an act of will or sheer will-power and indeed the meaning of "can" and "cannot", as we shall see below. But Hume denies direct experience in favour of science:

"We learn from anatomy, that the immediate object of power in voluntary motion, is not the member itself which is moved, but certain muscles, and nerves, and animal spirits, and, perhaps, something still more minute and more unknown, through which the motion is successively propagated, ere it reach the member itself whose motion is the immediate object of volition. Can there be a more

certain proof that the power, by which this whole operation is performed, so far from being directly and fully known by an inward sentiment or consciousness, is, to the last degree, mysterious and unintelligible? Here the mind wills a certain event: Immediately another event, unknown to ourselves, and totally different from the one intended, is produced: This event produces another, equally unknown: Till at last, through a long succession, the desired event is produced... How indeed can we be conscious of a power to move our limbs, when we have no such power; but only that to move certain animal spirits, which, though they produce at last the motion of our limbs, yet operate in such a manner as is wholly beyond our comprehension?" (Enquiry, P.66-7).

The physiological mechanism is not relevant to the analysis of bodily experience. The experience of moving, of raising one's arm, of reaching for a pencil, of one's arm not as a thing but as the power to reach a thing, is another matter. But if the question is whether we experience power, how we acquire "the idea of power" - or to put the matter in another way, what "power" means - it is this experience, and not what objectively, physiologically, happens when we have this experience, which is the relevant consideration. Hume's argument here is of exactly the same kind as his argument that taste and smell are really nowhere, which is to deny that one tastes a fig in one's mouth or smells a stink at a midden. The argument that we don't really see colours but only light of different wave-lengths belongs to the same family; just as, according to this argument, we don't see what we think we see, so for Hume we don't do what we think we do when we move an arm.

Hume's discussion is dominated by the question of necessary connection, the grounds of inference from the past to the present and the logical problem

of induction. Force, power, are treated simply as linguistic variants, and the animal nîsus - the experience of effort and exertion of force, successful or unsuccessful - is dismissed as giving only a vulgar and inaccurate idea of power. But how in Hume's sense can an idea be accurate or inaccurate? In this particular case, he would have to say that the impression, i.e., the actual experience of effort, exertion, pushing, was inaccurate too. What he might demand is a more precise analysis of our actual experience, but he is not at all concerned to give that. His demand for more accuracy seems to be akin to the demand for more accuracy in an account of seeing a coloured surface. One can only describe some aspects of this, but one cannot say what a colour is, so far as direct experience of colour is concerned. Similarly, one cannot say what a push or a pull or pressure or exertion are in direct experience without using synonymous expressions: one can only describe various cases, which it is indeed important to do accurately. But Hume is demanding in the case of power or force, what he would not dream of demanding in the case of colour.

There is not of course a precise parallel. We open our eyes and there are the colours. But we only experience the resistance, pressure, weight, strength and force of things in opposition to the effort we have to make to shift and manipulate them in a variety of ways and in their various impacts upon us; but for our own doings and tasks as embodied beings, it goes without saying that we should have no such experience and these words would be meaningless.\* But this is a matter of direct embodied experience like our seeing colour, shape and extension, but not, as might be and often is wrongly supposed of these, the experience of a mere passive, contemplative being, but of

\* cf. *L'Etre et le Neant*, pp. 365-366

a doer with hands and limbs. To do is to cause, but, I repeat, one isn't adding anything to the notion of doing by saying that.

One question which it is important and interesting to ask is why the story about volitions and movements of matter has been found so persuasive, for if it were not supported by some sort of experience it is unlikely that it would have survived and been widely accepted merely as the corollary of a metaphysical theory. What we must look for is the sort of experience which is readily transposed into the terms required by the theory. This sort of experience, of which it is said in traditional terms that the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak, is of the kind where there is indeed a conflict and ipso facto a certain duality, and which therefore lends itself to description in the dualistic terms of soul and body, will and body, or will and passions, where the passions are bodily passions. Here are some examples: one must get up to go to work, but the warmth, comfort and drowsiness are almost overwhelming; one wants to reach the summit of a mountain, but heat, thirst and fatigue make one falter - one is tempted to sink down and rest; one's anger is boiling up, but one tries to keep calm.

In these cases one is contending not - or not only - with an external situation but with what has happened to one bodily. Fatigue bears down, anger boils up, desire grips or impels, illness strikes, old age steals on. These things happen to one; one does not decide upon them or choose them, any more than one chooses to be born or where to be born. Hence they are so far like other given elements in one's situation - one must start from the given situation and act or re-act in one way or another. Since these happenings or states are bodily happenings or states, which one cannot help, it is



natural to suppose that the spirit or will resists or succumbs, masters them or is defeated by them. But a moment's reflection shows the fallacy. They are conscious; they are experiences; they are of the spirit as much as of the body. And on the other hand, the resistance, the attempt to overcome them is no less of the body than of the spirit: the will is a bodily will no less than when one is engaged in athletic combat. The unity of embodied experience is indissoluble. The mind-matter dualism applies plausibly to certain phases of it, but even in these the action or reaction of the will is bodily action. The will cannot act upon the body, for it is itself embodied. A doctrine which takes one's own body to be matter and nothing but matter must ignore the essential and original character of embodied experience. If the body as subject be rejected, the subject can only be a disembodied consciousness, not a seeing consciousness or a hearing consciousness and not a moving consciousness. The myth of the will is a myth of an unmoved mover, making non-motor movements.

The experience of moving and doing is inseparable from being a body. Hume's doctrine of perceptions does not deal with motion, other than perceived motion which strictly would be a succession of perceptions. In subsequent sensationalist doctrines, the experience of bodily movement was described as consisting of kinaesthetic sensations, and this, I think, takes the prize for idle verbalism.

Perceptions are essentially occurrences, events, happenings, as Hume indicates in saying that they are all of the nature of sensations like the pain of the cutting steel. That is to say that they are not doings. The mind or consciousness for Hume is often essentially passive, contemplative, and

not active. Its propensities and dispositions are in effect happenings too. The association of ideas just happens. Such a passive consciousness could have no direct experience of power or causality, but only of succession, contiguity, repetition and constant conjunction. On the whole Hume has seeing in mind when he speaks of perceptions, but not looking. Looking is active: it is the way a doer with a task in hand sees. Hume thought he found in experience what his mechanical model of explanation and his physiological premises persuaded him he must find. He could only, however, think this in his study, not when he played backgammon or was merry with his friends.

For the contemplative consciousness not only is there no direct experience of power or force, there is no direct experience of possibility, impossibility or necessity. Even in its liveliest moments it is passive: "For after a frequent repetition, I find, that upon the appearance of one of the objects, the mind is determined by custom to consider its usual attendant, and to consider it in a stronger light upon account of its relation to the first object. 'Tis this impression, then, or determination, which affords me the idea of necessity." (Treatise, P.155-6). Again; "We have established it as a principle, that as all ideas are derived from impressions, or some precedent perceptions, 'tis impossible we can have any idea of power or efficacy, unless some instances can be produced, wherein this power is perceiv'd to exert itself". (P.160). Again: "We never have any impression, that contains any power or efficacy. We never therefore have any idea of power."

My examples of the direct experience of force or power in heaving or hoisting

things would not count for Hume because doing is reduced to perceiving in a passive way and because a disembodied consciousness obviously cannot do anything. Nor can its objects have any function or use. The perception corresponding to what we call seeing a hammer is of a certain shape, size and colour and that is all. We cannot literally see a thing to knock in nails with, see its possibilities, see what we can do with it. We do not literally see what we can handle and grip: the visual is related to the tactual by association. That is to say, we can never see a hammer. A contemplative disembodied consciousness is not a doer and does not see as a doer. (It cannot, literally, see).

Nothing for such a consciousness is possible, impossible or necessary. What happens, happens, and what does not does not. Knowledge is knowledge of what happens. Since such a consciousness does not do anything there is nothing it can or cannot do; but anything may happen or be joined to anything. There can be no necessary connection in the happenings contemplated by the passive consciousness. The necessity has to be just another happening that befalls it: "'Tis this impression, then, or determination, which affords me the idea of necessity."

Let us then return to actual embodied experience, to pushes and pulls and dunts and doings, as well as to shapes and colours. It is not difficult to give examples of possibility, impossibility, and necessity. As in the case of power and force, they are not quasi-observed quasi-visually by a contemplative consciousness, but experienced in action. When I find I can or cannot do what I want to do by trying to do it, I experience possibility or impossibility. For example: a light bulb blows: I get up and raise my

arm, trying to reach it, standing on tiptoe at full stretch; no, I cannot quite reach it, I cannot stretch far enough; I must get closer. I need the light for I want to go on writing. To replace the bulb I need something to stand on. I must get a chair. And that's it; that was what was needed.

To describe this as a series of happenings would be to describe it as a series of meaningless antics, if it were not that antics are antics only by contrast with conduct that makes sense, rational conduct. What I experience as happenings or events are only certain elements in the situation, for example, the light going out. But even that is not a mere event: I am writing and am suddenly deprived of light to write by; I need light and lack it. The extinction of the light is not a mere happening but a happening to me in my situation, writing in the light. Only for an agent with desires and purposes, a pour-soi projecting a future, can there be any lack, anything missing, any negative experience. What I can and cannot do in pursuit of my purpose is what is possible or impossible. What I must do to achieve it is what is necessary. In order to understand practical necessity one must be a doer or agent. Like colour or force or deprivation, it can be described and talked about, but one must have had the experience to know what one is talking about.

The difficulty about necessity, possibility, and impossibility in any but a logical context for the empiricist is that in the only terms acceptable to him these words can have no meaning. Whatever is not mere happenings, data, is knowledge, and the problem of knowledge is the problem of objective, scientific knowledge. In scientific experiment one waits to see what happens

and then observes and notes the results. Though this peculiar experience becomes in empiricist doctrines the type of all experience and is read back into pre-scientific, pre-predicative experience, the model does not even apply to the case from which it is extracted. Objective experiments do not conduct themselves; nor do they happen, though they are designed to reveal what happens, under such and such conditions, if such and such be the case. If there were no embodied being who did not know but wanted to know what happens if... there would be no experiment. Only a subject can make an experiment and observe what happens. To observe, however, is not passively to contemplate, to be the recipient of data, but to know what to look for and look for it. But in empiricist doctrines the very experience of the subject, the maker of experiments, is reduced to happenings, events and processes such as are observed in an experiment, and the only acceptable account of it is of the same kind as the account of what happens in the experiment.

The body is an object, so the only account of it can be a causal account. The subject, if any, is a pure mind. But for such a mind there could be no barriers, opportunities or prospects; doing nothing, it could not succeed or fail; experiencing no necessity, it could invent nothing; there could be nothing to circumvent, surmount, exploit or profit from. It could not know how; it could only know that.

Let us turn then to knowing that, to knowledge of matters of fact, of what is observably the case.

Whatever we observe is observed in a world of which it forms a part and in which we ourselves are, and in which we and it stand in a multiplicity of

relationships to other things. Every "this" is "such and such": <sup>тоде</sup>~~тоде~~ is always <sup>толовде</sup>~~таковде~~. Without some of its relations, a thing cannot be conceived or described as being what it is - such and such a thing. Whatever is new and unfamiliar is so only in relation to what is familiar, the world as we already know it.

When Hume wants to illustrate the absence of causal necessity in what we actually observe, he takes the case of what we already conceive as billiard balls. These are spherical objects, hard, cold to the touch, heavy, smooth, which when struck roll silently over the green baize used in the game of billiards. Anyone who knows a billiard ball when he sees one, knows these defining characteristics. What do we mean when we say there is no necessity in the arrested motion of one and the imparted motion of another when the one impinges on the other? We can certainly imagine this not happening, even if we exclude from consideration all causes which might, unknown to us and contrary to our expectation, prevent it from happening. What we cannot logically do is to conceive billiard balls, used in the game of billiards as it is normally played, behaving otherwise than as they do. If they behave otherwise they are by definition not proper billiard balls (as prescribed in the book of rules) or it is not a proper table, or some other condition, explicit or implicit, of playing billiards is not fulfilled. To conceive them behaving otherwise is to conceive something else, for the concept of a billiard ball is the concept of a ball that behaves that way and billiards is possible only because it does: a ball is not just what is round, but what rolls and sets the other balls rolling. It must behave that way to be a billiard ball (though one can give the name of billiard-ball to anything one pleases.) We can predict that on impact with another billiard ball its



motion will be arrested, as we can predict that if we look at the side of it which is not in view we shall find it smooth and curved like this side. In no sense, however, is the mind determined to pass from what it observes to what usually follows - it can pass to anything it pleases. From seeing the billiard ball rolling, we can pass to imagining it swerving round the other, rebounding, stopping dead, or rising vertically. But the logic of our present concept of a billiard ball requires that it behave as it does in fact behave. There is no reason\* why a billiard ball or anything else should behave in a particular way or why it or anything else should exist, though the complex of conditions of its behaving as it does behave might be indefinitely extended. If its behaviour were completely irregular and unpredictable we could not conceive it as such and such at all. Nothing can be known of what offers no regularity and no pattern. Objects, says Hume, have no discoverable connection together. Unless they do they cannot be conceived or recognised.

Why do we believe that inductively established laws, causal relations, observed regularities, will hold good in future? What is the rational ground of prediction? Why do we believe that the future will be like the past, that laws which we have found to hold in the past will hold in the future? To answer this question, one must first ask what we mean by the future, how we conceive the future. What we mean by the future is not mere abstract futurity, but the future of the past and present. And the past and present as we conceive them are the way the world and everything in it has been and is so far as we know. To conceive the future is to conceive the future of what there is, and we conceive what there is in terms of causal and many other relations. There are no other terms in which we can conceive

\* What sort of reason could that possibly be?

the future. The sense in which many of our particular predictions and assumptions about the future may be unfulfilled is precisely the sense in which this has happened in the past: things, events and processes turned out not to be as we had supposed they were; we made mistakes. If the future is like the past there will be plenty of surprises for us; but we are familiar with surprises; we almost expect to be surprised. There can be no question of probability that the future will be like the past or present. If it is the future of the past or present it will be, for that is what we mean by the future. We can imagine what we please and dub this a possible future; but this is not the future of things and the world as we know them, which is the future.

Chapter 12

RUSSELL'S REDUCTION

"The Analysis of Mind" is carelessly written and it is often difficult to see how its arguments, drawn from the most disparate and diverse sources in scientific theory, may be connected. The doctrine which it attempts to expound is a form of "neutral monism", of which Hume is the classic exemplar. In what follows, I have tried to concentrate on the essentials of the doctrine as they illustrate characteristically empiricist assumptions, ignoring the considerable part of the book which seems to me to be merely playful or trivial.

What Russell calls sensations, aspects, appearances, or particulars correspond roughly to Hume's impressions. It is not clear how far they are deduced from physical or physiological theory and how far they are supposed to be given as such in experience. They are, however, the elements out of which minds on the one hand and physical objects on the other are somehow constructed or constituted. The difference lies in the relational structure, not in the stuff. Images, however, are peculiar to mind, and those particulars which are not sensations (if any) are peculiar to matter. But the elements as such or in themselves are neither mental nor physical, but neutral, occurrences.

Central to Russell's doctrine is the concept of a sensation which he takes over quite uncritically and which retains all its ambiguity. The doctrine is stated in Lecture V, "Psychological and physical causal laws", P.97:-

"A piece of matter, as it is known empirically, is not a single existing

thing, but a system of existing things. When several people simultaneously see the same table, they all see something different; therefore 'the' table, which they are all supposed to see, must be either a hypothesis or a construction. 'The' table is to be neutral as between different observers: it does not favour the aspect seen by one man at the expense of that seen by another. It was natural, though to my mind mistaken, to regard the 'real' table as the common cause of all the appearances which the table presents (as we say) to different observers. But why should we suppose that there is some one common cause of all these appearances? As we have just seen, the notion of 'cause' is not so reliable as to allow us to infer the existence of something that, by its very nature, can never be observed.

"Instead of looking for an impartial source, we can secure neutrality by the equal representation of all parties. Instead of supposing that there is some unknown cause, the 'real' table, behind the different sensations of those who are said to be looking at the table, we may take the whole set of these sensations (together possibly with certain other particulars) as actually being the table. That is to say, the table which is neutral as between different observers (actual and possible) is the set of all those particulars which would naturally be called 'aspects' of the table from different points of view. (This is a first approximation, modified later.)"

Russell, like Hume, is denying the "double existence", the perceptions and the unobserved cause of the perceptions, "something that, by its very nature, can never be observed." Russell is not just proposing another way of describing the ordinary experience of seeing a table, or at least does not intend just that. In Russell's terms two people can never see the same

thing. Nor can one person see the same thing for two moments running unless he remains immobile. Nor can he have another look at what he saw before. Things seen are momentary occurrences, and an occurrence can never be repeated. Russell's reason for proposing this view is his assumption that people who would ordinarily be said to be looking at a table are having sensations, and that each sensation is an occurrence where each person is, and not where in the ordinary sense the table is. And this assumption is derived from the traditional sensationalist view in which the data or elements of experience are assimilated to bodily sensations which are where one's body, in the ordinary sense, is.

Though Russell rejects one form of the causal account of perception, his own view is inseparable from some such account, for one of the main reasons for holding that a patch of colour or aspect of <sup>a</sup>thing seen over there is really a sensation here, is that it is held to be the effect of a cerebro-neural process initiated by the stimulation of the retina. This effect cannot be, in itself or "really", where we see it to be or as being - over there, for whereas the impingement of reflected light and the nervous impulse may be accounted for in physical and physiological terms, the final effect could not be accounted for in these terms if it were an occurrence at several yards or miles from the brain. And this is indeed Russell's view: a sensation occurs when a brain is part of the intervening medium.

This conflict between the doctrine of sensation and the way we see the alleged sensation may be avoided, as it is by Hume at times, by regarding the sensation as a mental event, an event in the mind, not in the world, and therefore as being in itself, or originally, or really, nowhere, for whatever is somewhere is spatially, physically, somewhere. But this of course raises

the problem how we could ever know that there was a physical world, and that there is a physical world is the assumption of the whole causal theory. Bodily sensations are good candidates for the rôle of neutral stuff, for they are felt, and are therefore mental or in the mind; but they are for example in the leg, and therefore bodily or in the body; so they are both mental and physical, or neither, neutral. But this does not get rid of the prior assumption of a physical world on which the whole theory depends, nor does it put the red of the sunset as I see it where my head is.

The view which regards the real table as the common cause of what several people would ordinarily be said to see from different angles is a view which Russell regards as natural, and no doubt it is. But it is not the natural view as this is displayed in ordinary language and conduct. The natural view is that the real table, or simply the table, is what we see in depth from one angle or another, not the cause of what we see. The table is the thing we sit at, or have our dinner at, visible and tangible, and not the cause of what is visible and tangible. It is not to be supposed for a moment that Russell does not know this; his very language makes this plain. But he never examines the experience of seeing a table or what people ordinarily mean by "table" and "seeing a table". Instead he attacks a silly view in which the real table is an inferred entity, not actually seen or leant upon, but standing there in depth with a hither and a further side.

Russell continues (P.98): "It may be said: If there is no single existent which is the source of all these 'aspects', how are they collected together?" From the natural standpoint, the question verges on absurdity. To walk round the table which stays where it is and one side disappears from view as another comes into view; we do not collect anything. If we suppose



the question may be intelligibly asked, however, here is the answer:

"The answer is simple: just as they would be if there were such a single existent. The supposed 'real' table underlying its appearances is, in any case, not itself perceived, but inferred, and the question whether such-and-such a particular is an 'aspect' of this table is only to be settled by the connection of the particular in question with the one or more particulars by which the table is defined. That is to say, even if we assume a 'real' table, the particulars which are its aspects have to be collected together by their relations to each other, not to it, since it is merely inferred from them. We have only, therefore, to notice how they are collected together, and we can then keep the collection without assuming any 'real' table as distinct from the collection. When different people see what they call the same table, they see things which are not exactly the same, owing to difference of point of view, but which are sufficiently alike to be described in the same words, so long as no great accuracy or minuteness is sought. These closely similar particulars are collected together by their similarity primarily and, more correctly, by the fact that they are related to each other approximately according to the laws of perspective and of reflection and diffraction of light. We suggest, as a first approximation, that these particulars, together with such correlated others as are unperceived, jointly are the table: and that a similar definition applies to all physical objects."

It is worth remarking that this sort of view forms the basis for the formerly widespread intellectualist view of perception, which Russell at times adopts. According to this view, we interpret what we see, fill it out with images, theorise about it, and the result of all this is what we say we

see or perceive. The model underlying this is of course the interpretation of evidence in solving a problem and seeking an explanation. Applying this model to perception, advocates of this view have to say that, of course, we do this unconsciously, thus putting the question beyond the reach of argument. Apart from that, however, it is difficult to understand how on this view there could be any such thing as veracious perception: the complaint about witnesses in law courts is precisely that they do not describe what they saw, but have drawn all sorts of conclusions from what they saw, taken dislikes to one party or another which influences their account, etc. To see is precisely not to image or imagine. On the sort of view which Russell is propounding which takes the table to be a set of appearances in the flat, the squareness of the table has to be the result of interpretation, and depth perception of the table would be as it were a photogrammetrical reconstruction. I have called this view "intellectualist" since it seems to me evident that it assimilates perception to an intellectual operation (though one which, unlike intellectual operations like solving logical problems, we are never aware of performing). But Russell's account of it (see, for example, page 81 and page 112) merely asserts in effect that a perception is sensations, beliefs and images.

To return, however, to Russell's account of what a table is, it is clear enough that by aspects, appearances, particulars, Russell does not mean anything essentially different from sensations. But if by an aspect were meant as much of the table as is now visible over there, its location would be over there. And the same might be meant by an appearance of the table in one sense. But in that sense, neither an aspect nor an appearance would correspond to a sensation occurring where the observer was. It would simply

be the now visible part of the table over there. In the other sense of "appearance" on which I have earlier dilated, the appearance of the table is the way the table looks to me or the way I see it, and it is a category mistake to attempt to assign a place to this either where I am or where the table is.

For Russell, however, as for Hume, appearances are occurrences and they are in the flat, not in depth; they are quasi-pictures. The squareness of the table cannot be seen except head-on. On this view, what people see when they look at a table top is not the same shape from different angles and looking different from different angles, but different shapes "owing to difference in point of view." This last phrase of course implies perception in depth yet Russell supposes that what is seen is seen in the flat, a skew projection of the table top from one angle or another. The table top therefore is the set of skew projections of the table top. As I have argued, it is only by supposing that these skew projections are like photographs with a surface that can be measured that they can be supposed to be anywhere or to have any measurable size. But looks of things are not photographs, nor are they anywhere. There is no questions of describing different projections in the same words on account of their likeness "so long as no great accuracy or minuteness is sought". The different looks from different angles are irretrievably and necessarily different: if they weren't the table would not be staying where it was as we move about it, and all these looks can perfectly well be described - foreshortening into a lozenge shape with two acute and two obtuse angles and so on. That is the way a square top looks from a certain angle in depth. If it did not look lozenge-shaped it would not be square and in depth. The square top is there; the lozenge shape is the way it looks

from here, or to me here. But the lozenge shape is not here, nor is it anywhere. Russell's collection of skew projections would remain, as it were, a collection of flat pictures which would never coalesce; but only as it were a collection, for being at no distance they could not be seen. Nor could they be related to each other "according to the laws of perspective and of reflection and diffraction of light", or collected together accordingly, for these laws presuppose planes and surfaces at different angles to each other in depth.

In the passages quoted, Russell has been concerned with sensations, appearances, and observations, and is evidently intending at least in part to give an account of how what we call a thing is constituted in our perceptual experience. His next move, however, is apt to leave one bewildered. Page 99:-

"In order to eliminate the reference to our perceptions, which introduces an irrelevant psychological suggestion, I will take a different illustration, namely, stellar photography.... If we assume, as science normally does, the continuity of physical processes, we are forced to conclude that, at the place where the plate is, and at all places between it and a star which it photographs, something is happening which is specially connected with that star... We can classify such happenings on either of two principles:

- "(1) We can collect together all the happenings in one place, as is done by photography so far as light is concerned;
- "(2) We can collect together all the happenings, in different places, which are connected in the way that common sense regards as being due to their emanating from one object."

To suppose that Russell is not concerned with sense experience, as his reference to the elimination of irrelevant psychological suggestions might lead one to do, and to suppose that he is concerned only with physical processes, would be to miss the whole point of his argument. The point is to establish the identity, and neutrality as between mind and matter, of the elements or stuff which related in one way constitute mind and in another way constitute matter. The effect of the light on the photographic plate is regarded by Russell as essentially the same as the observed appearance of the star at the place where the plate is. But this is a preposterous view. What we see when we look at a star is not a photograph of the star where we are, nor is our seeing the star identifiable with any sort of picture or representation where our head is. The spot on the photographic plate is neither the star nor an appearance of the star.

"Thus, to return to the stars, we can collect together either -

- (1) All the appearances of different stars in a given place, or,
- (2) All the appearances of a given star in different places.

"But when I speak of 'appearances', I do so only for brevity; I do not mean anything that must 'appear' to somebody, but only that happening, whatever it may be, which is connected, at the place in question, with a given physical object..." (P.100).

It is not necessary "for brevity" to speak of appearances at all, as his words of explanation show. But it is necessary to his purpose to speak of appearances, for he wants to identify what might be called the appearances of the star to different observers, or different people seeing the star, with happenings or occurrences where these people are, like the happenings at the

photographic plate. An appearance of a thing is an effect or occurrence at another place.

"According to the view that I am suggesting, a physical object or piece of matter is the collection of all those correlated particulars which would be regarded by common sense as its effects or appearances in different places. On the other hand, all the happenings in a given place represent what common sense would regard as the appearances of a number of different objects as viewed from that place. All the happenings in one place may be regarded as the view of the world from that place. I shall call the view of the world from a given place a 'perspective'. A photograph represents a perspective. On the other hand, if photographs of the stars were taken in all points throughout space, and in all such photographs a certain star, say Sirius, were picked out whenever it appeared, all the different appearances of Sirius, taken together, would represent Sirius. For the understanding of the difference between psychology and physics it is vital to understand these two ways of classifying particulars, namely:

- (1) According to the place where they occur;
- (2) According to the system of correlated particulars in different places to which they belong, such system being defined as a physical object.

"Given a system of particulars which is a physical object, I shall define that one of the system which is in a given place (if any) as the 'appearance of that object in that place.'" (P.101).

Russell seems actually to be foisting upon common sense the view that an appearance of an object is an effect or occurrence where one's head is.



These alleged effects or occurrences are collectively the object. And all the happenings in one place (where one head in the ordinary sense is) are "what common sense would regard as the appearances of a number of different objects as viewed from that place." But if the appearances are in that place they cannot be viewed from that place. Or is it appearances which are in and objects which are viewed from? On Russell's view objects cannot be viewed from anywhere, for they are simply collections of appearances at various places. This confusion of "from" and "to" with "at" or "in" is crucial in Russell's argument.

"All the happenings in one place may be regarded as the view of the world from that place." This amounts to saying, for example, that an occurrence where my head is may be regarded as my seeing the house across the street. But this experience cannot be located in my head; though I see with my eyes here, what I see is across the street. The word "perspective" is used to mean both "the view of the world from a given place" and "all the happenings in one place."

A photograph, says Russell, "represents a perspective". In the ordinary way, this is true. But it is not true as Russell seems to mean it. What it represents in his sense is the occurrences at the photo-sensitive plate at the moment of exposure, and this is not the sense in which a photograph may be said to represent a perspective, e.g. a photograph of a landscape in perspective, from a point of view. In his sense, the occurrences in, or on, or at, the plate do not represent a perspective; they are a perspective. For Russell, a perspective, like "a view of the world from...", is in one place. A picture of a landscape represents the landscape in perspective from

a point of view. But the landscape one sees or the view of the landscape one has from where one is standing is not a picture and is not where one is standing. Nor is Sirius or one's view of Sirius. But the photographs of Sirius are identified by Russell with the appearances of Sirius, and "all the different appearances of Sirius, taken together, would represent Sirius." According to Russell's previous argument they would not represent Sirius, but be Sirius. But, it need hardly be said, a heap of photographs would not be Sirius. Russell continues:-

"We can now begin to understand one of the fundamental differences between physics and psychology. Physics treats as a unit the whole system of appearances of a piece of matter, whereas psychology is interested in certain of these appearances themselves. Confining ourselves for the moment to the psychology of perceptions, we observe that perceptions are certain of the appearances of physical objects. From the point of view that we have been hitherto adopting, we might define them as the appearances of objects at places from which sense-organs and the suitable parts of the nervous system form part of the intervening medium. Just as a photographic plate receives a different impression of a cluster of stars when a telescope is part of the intervening medium, so a brain receives a different impression when an eye and an optic nerve are part of the intervening medium. An impression due to this sort of intervening medium is called a perception, and is interesting to psychology on its own account, not merely as one of the set of correlated particulars which is the physical object of which (as we say) we are having perception." (P.104).

From this it would appear that perceptions occur at that place where, in

the ordinary sense, the back of the head is, between which and the source of light lie the optic nerve and eyes as intervening medium. My seeing the house across the road is an occurrence behind my eyes. A perception is an impression which the brain receives. A set of such impressions - some manques, since there are not brains everywhere - is the physical object, what we call the table or the house across the road.

There are certainly occurrences where heads are, such as those recorded by the E.E.G. But no such occurrence can be identified with the house across the road, with an appearance of a house across the road, or with our seeing a house across the road. Such occurrences are not part of perceptual experience, though they are found experimentally to be associated with it. The brain is itself a thing which has to be seen, examined and subjected to experiment for this fact to be established at all, just as one might see, examine and experiment with a stone from the house across the road. Russell forgets that the brain is itself a "physical object", and therefore on his view of physical objects could not be part of an intervening medium between point A and point B, since it is the set of particulars or appearances everywhere but where in the ordinary sense it is. When he regards it as an intervening medium he takes it to be what is ordinarily meant by a thing or body in a certain position in relation to another things. But that is not how he defines a physical object.

This inconsequent procedure is characteristic and far-reaching. The alleged position of any of his particulars or sensations is given by reference to what are ordinarily called things, spatially related to each other. If the reader did not understand what was meant by a brain or a table in this ordinary sense, which is not what Russell says a brain or a table is, he could

not attempt to understand Russell's spatial references or his reconstruction of the world. But this understanding is founded on the actual experience of seeing things over there from here. There is no experience of seeing particulars where our heads are, no awareness of them. It is idle therefore to discuss residual problems such as how we would be led to postulate those particulars in the set which were not actual perceptions or sensations, or the manner of their collection into one system, or where and when one particular would end and another begin, spatially and temporally. It is of some interest, however, to examine Russell's view of space and time.

Chapter 13

RUSSELL'S VIEW OF SPACE AND TIME

Russell assumes spatial and temporal relations as these are commonly understood. Spatial relations are relations of things and events, and positions and spaces can only be specified by reference to these. For example, the window is beyond the table and the table is between the door and the window. But the place specified as "where the table is, between the door and the window" is not the place where the particulars of the set which, according to Russell, is the table, are. It could not be identified or referred to if the table were what Russell says it is, for it is the spatial determination of the table (in the ordinary sense), where the table is, or between where the door is and where the window is, and nothing else. To assume otherwise is to suppose that space is not a relational order, but as Kant expresses it, a self-subsistent non-entity, containing places which are where they are, irrespective of what there is or is not in them, or at them, and indeed whether there is, or is not, anything at all. To identify a place, as Russell does, by reference to a table or a brain, and then say in effect that the particulars of the set which is the table or the brain are not there, is not to identify any place at all. This is Russell's position: sensations are where your head is, but your head is not there.

A similar procedure is to be found in Russell's treatment of time in his chapter on memory:-

"In investigating memory-beliefs, there are certain points which must be borne in mind. In the first place, everything constituting a memory-belief is happening now, not in that past time to which the belief is said to refer.

It is not logically necessary to the existence of a memory-belief that the event remembered should have occurred, or even that the past should have existed at all. There is no logical impossibility in the hypothesis that the world sprang into being five minutes ago, exactly as it then was, with a population that 'remembered' a wholly unreal past. There is no logically necessary connection between events at different times; therefore nothing that is happening now or will happen in the future can disprove the hypothesis that the world began five minutes ago. Hence the occurrences which are called knowledge of the past are logically independent of the past; they are wholly analysable into present contents, which might, theoretically, be just what they are even if no past had existed." (PP. 159-160).

Russell's account of time and memory is based on the reduction of a memory now of an occurrence then to a complex occurrence now, just as his account of space and perception is based on the identification of the place where something is with the place from which it is seen, of there with here. But just as he takes for granted the distinction between the two places, so he continues to assume the distinction between the two times.

To say "it is not logically necessary to the existence of a memory-belief that the event remembered should have occurred" is to say no more than that we may be mistaken about what we saw or heard or did, that our memories may play us false. But to add "or even that the past should have existed at all" is not just to extend the previous statement but to make a different sort of statement. It is to say, not that we may be more or less mistaken about everything in the past, but that there may have been nothing we could remember well or ill, or fail to remember, that nothing at all may ever have



happened, that there may have been no past. It is to apply to the entire past, to the totality of past events, to the world in the past, the sort of statement which can only significantly be made about particular events and things in the past, and this is to apply to past time, the sort of statement which can only be made about things or events in time or at times, having time-determinations.

"There was no rain in Edinburgh yesterday" is significant and may be true or false. But "there was no past" is contradictory, for the expressions "there was" and "there was not" essentially refer to the past and cannot be used to make true or false statements unless they do. The past is presupposed in the truth or falsity of such statements. "There was a past" is tautologous, and "there was not a past" contradictory.

The result of identifying consciousness and object is that anything anywhere and at any time, which we would ordinarily say we think of, or remember or imagine, is simply a component of a complex occurrence here and now. The various hypostases - perceptions, images, thoughts, memories - are all essentially present. Pastness therefore has to be a characteristic of a particular type of present complex, a date-stamp as it were. But the term "present" or "present event" is vacuous except in relation to past and future events. So is "now" except in relation to "then" (after or before, earlier or later). Past, present and future are correlative terms. It is perhaps most obvious that one cannot talk of the past or future without an implicit reference to the present: it is solely in relation to the present that anything can be said to be past. But it would be equally meaningless to talk of the present without any implicit reference to the past. The pastness of past events is

their having occurred before present events, and the presence of present events is their occurring after past events. If pastness were merely a characteristic of a "belief-feeling", as Russell suggests, it would not be a present belief-feeling, since as such it would not have occurred after anything. It would not be really present if other events were not just as really past.

What we call one time, one moment or one period of time, is a time-determination of some event or events. The time of any event is the time it is in relation to the time-determinations of other events before and after. To insist with Kant that all beginnings are in time is to say they are after, or later than, something else. "There is no logically necessary connection between events at different times," says Russell. The sense in which there is a logically necessary connection is that all events are temporal events, before and after other events. The "first of all events" would not be an event, for it would have no time-determination, would not be at any time, there being no previous events and no previous times. The supposed time-determination "five minutes ago" in "the world sprang into existence five minutes ago" would not be a genuine time-determination, since it would not be after any other time-determination, there being no previous events.

To assume otherwise is to suppose that time is independent of the world, of what there is, of whether anything ever happens, and to suppose that even if there was nothing there would still be different times. This is, of course, the "self-subsistent non-entity" view of time, which derived whatever plausibility it had from regarding different times as themselves occurrences in time, before and after other times, just as the similar view of space regards different places or positions as being in different places or positions in

space. On any other view, however, "an event five minutes ago" implies "something else before that".

On Russell's "logically possible" hypothesis, not only the word "remember" would require the quotation marks he gives it, but also "past" and "present". What we called the past would not be really past, but neither would what we called the present be really present. For we would not know the date. The present time is, for example, twenty years after the war; Russell is an old man; some people are old, some young; some industries are developing, some in decay. The whole present state of affairs is understood in terms of the past and cannot be spoken about without implicit reference to it. It is meaningless to talk of the present apart from what there is now, the present state of affairs, and what there is now includes old and young, new and old, activities in progress, processes which were begun before now, and so on. To omit the numerous quotation marks which the hypothesis would require is to display the contradiction in saying there is a present but there was no past. Innumerable "true" propositions, particular and general, would be untrue, and it is these which define what we take to be the present. "We" should be "living" under a complete "illusion" if we "'remembered' a wholly unreal past". The "present" would not be the present.

The error in the hypothesis arises from what one may call the naturalistic or psychologistic fallacy. The essence of this fallacy is the attempt to reduce subjectivity to objectivity, consciousness to object, to reduce seeing, knowing, believing, feeling, desiring, etc., to certain kinds of complex occurrences. The effect in the case of knowing or remembering in particular is paradoxically a subjectivist theory of knowledge and truth, the occurrences

here and now, constituting knowing or remembering, being logically independent of whatever else is the case.

Chapter 14

THE NATURALISTIC FALLACY

It should be said at the outset that victims of the psychologistic fallacy generally evade its consequences at the cost of radical inconsistency. In what follows I shall try both to expose the fallacy and to show how it is evaded.

The hypostatized image plays an essential part in Russell's account of mind. He takes it to be a mental occurrence, a sort of picture, which we can contemplate and observe and whose relation to anything else - what, in the ordinary sense, it would be said to be of - is inferential. Strictly, the observing of it would have to be another mental occurrence, but though Russell discusses this point in his chapter on introspection, he never resolves it. An image for Russell is a copy of a sensation, but since to remember a sensation is to have an image and there is no other way of remembering a sensation, this can never be known, for each is simply a present occurrence. And so are the present beliefs and belief-feelings which are supposed to establish the relation of the one to the other.

"The reference of thoughts to objects is not, I believe, the simple direct essential thing that Brentano and Meinong represent it as being. It seems to me to be derivative, and to consist largely in belief: beliefs that what constitutes the thought is connected with various other elements which together make up the object. You have, say, an image of St. Paul's, or merely the word 'St Paul's' in your head. You believe, however vaguely and dimly, that this is connected with what you would see if you went to St. Paul's,

er what you would feel if you touched its walls: it is further connected with what other people see and feel, with services and the Dean and Chapter and Sir Christopher Wren. These things are not mere thoughts of yours, but your thought stands in a relation to them of which you are more or less aware. The awareness of this relation is a further thought, and constitutes our feeling that the original thought had an 'object'. But in pure imagination you can get very similar thoughts without these accompanying beliefs; and in this case your thoughts do not have objects or seem to have them. Thus in such instances you have content without objects." (Page 18).

Though these remarks are indeed preliminary, as Russell says, there is nothing in them which seriously misrepresents Russell's position, and if they are obscure nothing he says later really makes them less so. It is intended to be an account of what happens when one images or imagines St. Paul's. According to Russell's account, we have an image which we believe is connected with St. Paul's or what we should see if we went to St. Paul's. But it may be asked, if we think of what we should see if we went to St. Paul's what is this but to image St. Paul's? The only case which would at all fit Russell's description is the case where we imagine something which we cannot locate in any definite place, when we have to try to place what we are imagining - a certain named building, say. For Russell, however, our image is a picture, of which the connection with St. Paul's has to be established by the feeling or belief that they are related. To have an image of St. Paul's, there must be the image, the thought of St. Paul's, and the belief, if not other "thoughts" as well. Now there is no doubt that Russell means by "St. Paul's" that very cathedral in the city. When one images St. Paul's, however, the meaning is



not something apart from the image. To image St. Paul's is to mean that very cathedral. When one imagines St. Paul's, it is ipso facto St. Paul's one is imagining. To image is one mode of intending or meaning an object. St. Paul's is the intended or meant object, even if meanwhile some catastrophe has befallen it and it is no more.

For Russell, however, images are entities, and are not essentially of anything. As for others who hold this view, his problem is to distinguish them from sensations either by their inherent characteristics or by their causal antecedents, and the latter he regards as the only reliable way. (P.149) These causal antecedents are brain processes, initiated in the case of sensations at the external sense organs and in the case of images within the brain. This is not how in fact we do distinguish them. But what he says of the brain processes with which they are respectively associated is no doubt true. The obvious reason for holding it to be true, however, is the distinction we do make between seeing something and imagining something. When we see something it is there before our eyes, but when we imagine something it is usually not, and if it is, it is difficult to imagine and not see it. If we did not make this distinction independently of any causal theory about seeing and imaging, we could not make the sort of distinction Russell proposes, for we would not know whether we were seeing or imagining the evidence for brain processes.

Russell's account of memory is closely related to his view of images. The image is a present occurrence and the pastness of what is remembered is reduced to a present belief-feeling. What this belief-feeling is about is a present image. The belief "may be expressed in the words 'this existed'".

It is simply a "specific kind" of present belief-feeling - "the reference to the past lies in the belief-feeling, not in the content believed."

(P.186) "In the simplest kind of memory we are not aware of the difference between an image and the sensation which it copies, which may be called its 'prototype'. When the image is before us, we judge rather 'this occurred'. The image is not distinguished from the object which existed in the past: the word 'this' covers both, and enables us to have a memory-belief which does not introduce the complicated notion 'something like this'."

It is true that the image is not distinguished as an entity from what it is of, for it is not before us and is not an entity or quasi-object. When we now imagine something past, there is only one object - something past. But Russell wants to suggest that the unsophisticated or simple person, of whom he makes great play in this chapter, does not distinguish between something past and something present. When we recall something in imagination it is that very thing or situation we mean. If we say "this occurred" we mean what did occur and there is no confusion of this with whatever is occurring now. Russell's story about the imprecision of unsophisticated people is a tall one. He wants to suggest that they fail to distinguish the picture before them from the past event which it represents. This would not be true even if an image were a picture: as if when someone said: "That's the battle of Lepanto on the wall", he actually thought there was a battle in progress on the wall. This is a desperate shift in support of a bad theory.

The problem is how to get the reference to the past into an analysis of memory which leaves no room for anything but present occurrences. Russell's procedure is simply to assert that the present belief-feeling refers to the

present image, and the time-determination "past" lies in the nature of the feeling, not in the image. But in what sense can the time-determination "past" lie in a present feeling any more than in a present image? The only time-determination which could "lie in" either would be "present". The nature of the belief-feeling, we are told "is that called 'remembering' or (better) 'recollecting'". It is only subsequent reflection upon this reference to the past that makes us realise the distinction between the image and event recollected. When we have made this distinction, we can say that the image 'means' the past event." If the reference to the past were in the belief - "a specific feeling or sensation or complex of sensations" - incomprehensible though this might be we would be remembering. But that won't do, for what we would be "remembering" would still be a present image. So we have by reflection to realise the distinction between the image and the event recollected.

But how on earth on Russell's theory do we ever make this distinction? It is hard to resist the conclusion that Russell simply realised that the past event had to be got in somehow if "memory" was to be memory at all, and made it materialise by "subsequent reflection". This reflection would of course be distinct from the happenings and occurrences to which mental life would be otherwise reducible, and which he set out to show it would be entirely reducible. The "past" event, however, need not be a past event, for as we have seen, on Russell's view, it is logically possible that there was no past, and therefore that there is no memory, but only "memory" of the past.

Russell's doctrine is based upon physical and psychological theory, of which he takes various aspects as premises of his analysis of what there is

and of his reduction of perceiving, believing, knowing, etc. to occurrences. The spatial and temporal orders are assumed in the premises, but the reduction of mental life to present occurrences then suggests the possibility that there was no past. But if there were no past, the premises, physical and psychological, would be false. The hypothesis could only be advanced if the analysis of all there is, including knowledge, into occurrences were true, but the truth of the hypothesis would falsify the analysis. It is true that the logical structure of Russell's doctrine is very difficult to discern, but it is evident that his crucial arguments are taken from physics and to a somewhat less extent from psychology. The essence of the naturalistic fallacy is the attempt to explain experience in terms of natural sciences whose only evidence lies in experience. Russell's scientistic assumption is that whatever may be known about "mind" is to be scientifically, empirically known, and this means by external or "internal" observation.

Before I deal with behaviourism and introspectionism I would like to deal with an older example of the psychologistic fallacy, now universally abandoned - the attempt to reduce the principle of contradiction and the other "laws of thought" to facts of human psychology, to beliefs or convictions, which, though peculiarly forceful, might nevertheless have been otherwise. This amounts to saying that it is logically possible that the principle of contradiction should not be true, that its denial is not a contradiction. But if it were not true, this statement itself could not be true.

To understand other cases of the fallacy, it is not enough to rest content with the distinction between on the one hand analytic, logical or necessary truths, and on the other hand synthetic, factual and contingent truths. We

must examine the premises which led to the attempt to reduce logical truth to contingent truth, logic to psychology, for these assumptions are essentially the same as those which lead to the attempt to reduce the past to present "memories", things seen to present perceptions, things imaged to present images and belief feelings, facts known to the knowing of "facts", and so on. The assumption which is common to doctrines attempting to reduce logical truth to psychological fact is that mental life is reducible to causally connected events, occurrences, processes, and states, psychological facts which are empirically observed, observed by an "inner perception" or introspection. This assumption no doubt dates back to Locke's account of the ideas of reflection which are acquired by the mind's attention to its own activity about its ideas of sensation. On such a view, introspection is no less a source of empirical knowledge than external observation. What is observed is events and processes which may be subsumed under various laws of succession and association, by the formulation of hypotheses and their experimental verification, as in physics. The process of perceiving and thinking, the state of knowing, may be thus described and the laws which govern the occurrences constituting these activities may be formulated.

Notoriously, things did not quite work out that way, but this could be put down to the peculiar difficulties of the subject matter, as could differences in the procedures of biology and physiology, say, as compared with physics. In principle, the mind was a domain of empirical investigation no less than the physical world. If knowledge of the mind were possible at all it must be empirical knowledge, knowledge of observed facts and verified hypotheses. And the processes which constitute knowing must be known, if at all, in this way. Now if thought and knowledge are reducible to mental processes, the "laws

f thought" must be laws governing mental processes, though of a very general and fundamental character, and the fact that the mental processes do not always appear to conform to these laws - logical errors are very common - may be ascribed to countervailing causes, as may, for example, that fact that the compass needle does not always point north. (Why one process or succession of occurrences should be considered erroneous as compared with another remains a mystery, for what is simply is, and Hume's theory of knowledge is itself open to this very objection.) Thus the laws of thought like the laws of association would be empirically established laws governing mental phenomena. That is true would be what we believe with conviction, and of the laws of thought we are completely convinced. They are the most general, most indispensable of laws, but they simply happen to be as they are. Their necessity remains contingent, psychological necessity.

If such a doctrine merely asserted that it was psychologically possible to believe a logical impossibility, to believe that a logical contradiction was true, it would not be open to any radical objection. To believe that a logical contradiction is true is to fail to realise that it is a logical contradiction; logical contradictions are not all self-evident, but often very difficult to detect. But what is asserted is not just this commonplace, but that we could recognise a contradiction and believe it to be true. Being physically as we are, we cannot fly like birds. Being mentally as we are, we cannot recognise a contradiction and believe it to be true: it is a psychological impossibility. This impossibility is contingent, de facto, like our inability to fly. But if this were so, how could we know it was contingent or suppose that it could be otherwise? It would be psychologically impossible. But what then could "contingent" mean but "not logically necessary"? And this



would simply re-establish the distinction which the theory set out to abolish. If we believed logical contradictions to be true, e.g. that "p is true and p is false" is true, we should simply be in error, making a logical blunder, failing somehow to recognise the meaning of "true" and "false", of "is" and "is not", of assertion and denial. These meanings are assumed in all empirical investigation.

The psychologistic view is not only untenable as regards logic and knowledge of logical truths, it is equally untenable as regards empirical knowledge, perception, memory, thought, feeling, desire, etc. On the psychologistic theory we could be said to know or apprehend a matter of fact, or the truth of the proposition expressing it, only when a certain conjunction of mental phenomena, itself a state of affairs or matter of fact, came to pass. How then would one determine the truth of the proposition "I know that this typewriter is on the table"? To know that we knew the typewriter was on the table, we should have to know that the typewriter was on the table but also we should have to know the mental matter of fact constituting our knowing this. But to know that we know these two matters of fact, we should have to know these matters of fact plus the higher order mental matters of fact constituting our knowing them. And so on, ad inf. Similarly to know that "I see a typewriter" was true, we should have to know that there was a typewriter in a certain place and that the mental occurrences constituting seeing were actually occurring, and that the relation between these occurrences was of the appropriate kind. A further difficulty is the "systematic elusiveness" of the introspective observation. If empirical observation of the introspective kind were possible at all, it would involve all or most of the "activities" which it investigates, but these would

not be what was investigated or observed; it would not be observing its own activity, the activity of introspection. It is hard to say what the mind would be observing, but its procedure would be objective, scientific and empirical only at the cost of failing to do what it sets out to do - to observe its own activities.

. For empiricism there are two sorts of knowledge - knowledge of logical truths and knowledge of matters of fact. But if the mind were as some empiricist doctrines have held it to be, neither kind of knowledge would be possible. For knowledge itself would be entirely reducible to mental states, events and processes - matters of observable fact - and knowledge of any matter of fact would therefore itself be reducible to a matter of fact. The state constituting knowledge, being a matter of fact, could have only a de facto relation to any state of affairs in the world. The relation of knowing to what was known would be external and contingent. The state constituting "knowing that X is A" would be logically compatible both with "X is A" and "X is not A", since the mental state would be only contingently related to the other state of affairs. If knowing were a mental state of affairs it would not necessarily be untrue to say "I know that X is A" if X were not in fact A. If, however, one defines the relation of knowing to known in such a way that this would be contradictory, nevertheless, according to the introspectionist doctrine, one would have to know both what the external state of affairs was and what the mental state of affairs was in order to determine whether the relationship between them constituted a case of knowledge. But how could one know that one knew what the external state of affairs or the internal state of affairs were? Each of these would be con-

stituted by a relation between two states of affairs and so on.

If it is asserted that no introspectionist ever actually held such a doctrine, my reply is that if introspection is held to be empirical observation (as it commonly was) there is no escape from the above absurdities. It is because introspectionists commonly take another kind of knowledge, which they will not recognise as knowledge, for granted that what they say is often plausible.\* And it is true that the word "introspection" has been used in many ways. A subject describing what he sees in an experiment in perception, for example, would be described by some peculiarly inane psychologists as giving an introspective report, a usage which identifies introspection with extraspection. What I am concerned to attack is the view that there is any sort of empirical observation apart from the commonly recognised kind - external perception of things and events in the world.

People say, for example, "I know the height of the Eiffel Tower", or "I am listening to the radio" or "I see a man over there" or "I remember meeting Tom last week". These verbs in the first person singular are among the commonest in the English language. Prima facie, everyone understands such expressions, knows what they mean, and assumes that they can be true or false. This common understanding is the starting point of any analysis, philosophical or psychological, of mind. Since people do not suppose that any introspective observation is required to verify them, since they are unaware of making any such observation when they make such assertions, there would seem to be no ground for holding that they do. For everyone admits that the basis for such assertions as "There is a fly in my tea" is observation, but statements beginning "I know..." or "I see..." or "I hear..." are just as common and if they

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\* See P. ~~155~~ et seq.

were founded on introspective observation how could people fail to be aware of this?

Part of the inspiration of behaviourism was the need to reject introspection as a source of empirical knowledge. For the consistent behaviourist - relatively consistent - "seeing", "knowing", "listening to", "thinking", "being in pain", etc., all essentially refer to observable public happenings, just as a dog's hunger is its salivation, tail-wagging, etc.. Behaviourism has this signal virtue that it is not concerned with alleged ghostly happenings in a non-spatial place called the mind, but with visible, observable happenings. But the reduction of mental life to externally observable states, events, and processes leads to a difficulty no less acute than its reduction to internally observable states, events and processes. A strict behaviourist must feign anaesthesia, or possibly accept solipsism. It is commonly supposed that people can feel pain, say, a pain in the leg, and that groans and the screwing up of the face and so on are the expression or symptoms of the pain, but not the pain itself. And the purpose and virtue of anaesthetics are held to be the stopping of the pain itself. But a strict behaviourist would be obliged to hold that their purpose is to change the patient's behaviour, to stop him screwing up his face and groaning and talking about the pain in his leg. But everyone maintains that he knows what pain is, what "pain" means, and it certainly is not publicly observable antics.

Again, a behaviourist must observe the behaviour of the so-called subject, the dog or the baby, but it would seem that without external observation of his own behaviour he cannot be said to know that he has observed the dog or the baby. He cannot know that he sees the dog unless he sees himself seeing. And if it be supposed that he might think over the experiments of the day alone

in his armchair in the evening or wonder whether to go to the cinema, the only evidence of this would be incipient vocal movements in the throat, which he does not observe and could not know he was observing if he did. There is no evidence acceptable to him as a behaviourist that he is thinking at all and no evidence that he has mental images or images anything.

Again, it will be said this is a caricature. No behaviourist denies conscious experience, and it is precisely because it is not empirically observable that he decides for reasons of method to ignore it. This is much too kind to behaviourists; it is unwise to take the plea of philosophical asepsis at its face value. I shall argue, however, that the behaviourist does not ignore conscious experience but takes it entirely for granted.

Introspectionism and behaviourism have in common the assumption that the only knowledge of mind as of matter is empirical knowledge, knowledge of fact, and such knowledge is founded on observation of states, events and processes. The model of observation is what everyone means by observation - looking and seeing what happens - which is no less indispensable for the verification of an elaborate scientific hypothesis than for the common purposes of every day. But if this model applied to our supposed knowledge of the mind, if the evidence for the truth or falsity of statements beginning "I see...", "I am wondering whether...", "I am uneasy about..." were obtained by observation in anything like this sense, "I" would not refer to the speaker any more than "effervescent liquid in the test tube" refers to the chemist. But no one seriously supposes that he has to make observations on which to base assertions that he sees, is wondering whether, is uneasy about, is thinking that, or knows that, or remembers that. And if to know is to know by empirical

observation, he does not and cannot know that he sees, hears, etc.

But the common conviction is that such statements can be true or false and that there must be <sup>a</sup> sense in which we can know whether they are true or false. These expressions plainly refer not simply to events and happenings in the world but to our experience of them and the various ways in which we experience them. This experience is made explicit in reflexion or self-awareness, for example, the experience of being a body here seeing something over there. When we simply describe what we see, we are not describing this experience, but what is reflexively described is implicit in our seeing and in the visibility of what is seen. If reflexion or self-awareness were not completely commonplace in the way which I have tried to elaborate earlier, some of the commonest and most familiar expressions of the language would be hard to understand - "I see...", "I've got it!" (said on solving a problem), "I remember...", "I seem to remember..." But everyone understands them to all appearances as I understand them, and I understand them because I know what it is to see, to think, to wonder, to be puzzled, to have a flash of illumination, to remember, etc. Such statements of experience are not incorrigible, nor, lying apart, are they always true, for the experience of seeing, for example, is inseparable from something seen, and we may mistake an after-image for a patch on the wall. (Whether we say we see an after-image, however, or just have an after image, is a matter of little moment - its peculiarities are easily enough discerned by reflexion. So indeed are the peculiarities of the empiricist philosopher's hobby horse - hallucinations, according to those who have had them.)

Our experience as embodied beings is taken for granted in all intelligible



observation statements about the world. Such statements do not refer to it, but it is solely by virtue of it that they refer to anything at all. Objectivity is the correlate of subjectivity. The attempt to reduce the one to the other merely leads to confusion, for it deprives words of their meaning and their meaning is neither more nor less than what we mean by them. The explicitation and analysis of linguistic meaning is useless unless it is an analysis of what we do mean by the expressions we use, as indeed it is in J.L. Austin and the better linguistic analysts. The correctness of such an analysis is not a matter of inductive observation of the circumstances in which the expressions in question occur, as it might be if the injunction "look for the use" were to be followed. The only question is: would I say that in such and such a case? Is that what I mean by...? And this is known by reflexion, not by any sort of empirical observation. For language, the power of speech and expression, is like all my skills embodied in me. I am in possession of it. Nobody who wasn't would have the remotest idea what the pellucid Austin was talking about.

Such plausibility as the introspectionist and behaviourist doctrines have depends on the common understanding of what expressions referring to experience mean, the reflexive understanding of what it is to see, hear, be hungry, be depressed, think, wonder, desire, etc. In order to say what their topic is - hunger, anger, fear, etc., - they have to use the words whose meaning everyone knows, and it is mere obscurantism to put them in quotation marks. It is an illusion to suppose that these words are merely used by way of introduction in their ordinary meanings, later to be abandoned. Behaviorism<sup>u</sup> remains secretly dependent throughout on such ordinary meanings. The physiological symptoms and visible manifestations of hunger and anger, for example, as the

behaviourist describes them could only be described and grouped as related manifestations by one who already knew what hunger and anger were like, what it was to be angry and to be hungry, and to be embodied. When anger is there after redefined as an observable type of antic, the secretion of adrenalin, increase in blood sugar, etc. this is a mere assertion that the meaning of "anger" is not what we normally mean by "anger". But the entire discourse depends for its intelligibility upon our knowing what anger is by having been angry.

The conclusive argument similarly against Russell's analysis in "The Analysis of Mind" of what "Napoleon" means or what we mean by "Napoleon", is that we mean what we mean and we do not mean what Russell says we mean, either by "Napoleon" or by "table". This is no low, vulgar jibe, though in Hume's sense of "vulgar" I mean to be vulgar. For either we do not mean what Russell says we mean by "Napoleon" or we do not mean what Russell means by "what we mean". From a description of Napoleon in Russell's terms (sets of series and series of sets of sensation<sup>5</sup>, etc.) it would be utterly impossible to know who or what was being described, much less to learn anything of interest about it or him. Compared with this vulgar objection, the criticism of Russell's doctrine of sensations is mere trifling, though it would seem to be an equally conclusive objection to his theory that we are never aware of the alleged "ultimate brief existents that go to make up the collections we call things or persons" and which would be spoken of "by means of some elaborate phrase, such as 'the visual sensation which occupied the centre of my field of vision at noon on January 1, 1919'." In this phrase of Russell's everything is intelligible except the word "sensation", for the field of vision is simply the field of seeing - what one has within sight with one's

head in one position - but one cannot ask of the sensation what distance it was at; one can only ask that of things and events in the world that one sees in depth. The elaborate phrase does not refer to anything, such as one ever experiences.

The short answer to the question "How do you know you see, hear, think, are pleased, etc.?" is "By seeing, etc.", or "Because I do see, etc." People tend to be baffled and bewildered by the question, and if they produce this answer they tend to feel that it is not really an answer at all. (Russell takes this view in his discussion of an article by Knight Dunlap, the American psychologist, who insists that there is knowing but no observation, P.114). I think it is essentially the correct answer, and I think it is also understandable why it is felt not to be an answer. In all their enquiries and investigations and projects and actions, people take themselves for granted; being an embodied consciousness is the a priori condition of projects, actions, and investigations. Reflexion or self-awareness is merely the explicitation of what is implicit, in the sense that we take it for granted. If such explicitation were not commonplace, we could not use or understand the countless ordinary words which refer to and describe, not just what is the case in the world, but our experience of it, and words such as "here" and "now" which have no meaning apart from our experience of embodied being, being a body. But the meaning of all these words is taken for granted in expositions of doctrines of mind and body which, if true, would make our ordinary understanding of them impossible.

Russell's is such an account. His account of experience does not start from experience, but from physics, and what it boils down to is the assertion that what we mean by the ordinary words describing experience is not what they

really mean but just what we imagine or suppose they mean. There is no better example, though there are many others, than Russell's account of a table.

If philosophy is to give an account of experience, it must be concerned with the actual experience we do have and not with hypothetical or possible "experiences" we do not have, nor derive from physical and other theories, the evidence for which lies in the experience we do have, an account of experience as it must be, in Russell's naïve phrase, "if physics is true." There is no appeal to physics against experience.

Chapter 15

WHY SENSE-DATA?

When Hume cites houses, trees, and mountains as examples of impressions, or uses the words "object" and "impression" indifferently, or says that the vulgar take their impressions to be their only objects, it occurs to one to wonder whether the doctrine of impressions and ideas is anything more than a way of talking. But it is plain that Hume believes that impressions and ideas are what there really is, that they are known to us by consciousness, as he says, such as they really are, and that they are as they appear, whatever we take them to be.

Most sense-datum doctrines in the past seventy years have shared this ambiguous character, but their authors, like Hume, have mostly supposed that they were making assertions about the nature of our perceptual experience and not merely proposing another way of talking about it. Some, however, and notably A.J. Ayer, in "The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge", have maintained that such doctrines, properly understood, are no more than proposals to adopt a linguistic expedient, to talk in a certain way, to use a less ambiguous language for philosophical purposes. If Hume sometimes seems to be doing no more than this, though he intends to do much more, Ayer would have us believe he intends to do no more, though he tries to do very much more. For as we shall see, he takes sense-data to be, if not that there indubitably, really is, at least what is indubitably given in perception. A sense-datum statement is incorrigible, except linguistically. But what does "linguistically" mean? I shall argue that Ayer has mistaken

the nature of sense-experience and of language alike, and that his mistake about the one is intimately related to his mistake about the other.

The essential point may be stated at the outset. Actual sense experience as we have it is the experience of an embodied subject with eyes to see, ears to hear, hands to grasp, legs to walk with, etc., in depth, in the world, in the midst of things. Language is the language of such a being. What would a language be that was not uttered or heard or read? What would it mean to utter without tongue or teeth or lips? To hear without ears? To read without eyes? There is only one answer: nothing. There is not a being who experiences and a being who describes or expresses, but one who expresses what he experiences. The language is as it is, because experience is as it is. To invent another language is to invent a language in which one can say only what one can already say. Ostensibly, Ayer admits this, but his "language" is not of this kind; that is why it cannot be used, why one cannot say anything in it; and this too he admits, though he does not understand why.

But it is worth asking in the first place why, if it were possible to use the schse-datum language, he would want to do so. The reason is given in the first chapter of "The Foundation<sup>5</sup> of Empirical Knowledge", on "the argument from illusion". It is the alleged ambiguity of the ordinary language in cases where we may be mistaken in one way or another about what we see. These are all lumped together as illusions. But most of the cases cited by Ayer are not visual illusions, and in only one or two of them could we be said to be mistaken about what we see or to draw false conclusions from what we see.



Among the "illusions" cited are mirror images. But to call seeing one's face in the mirror an illusion is the height of absurdity. Mirrors may produce illusions and may be used for this very purpose, for example, to make a small café look spacious, to give "the illusion of space". Once one sees the mirrors, it still goes on looking spacious, but one is under no illusion, for one sees where the mirrors are; one sees the mirrors as well as what is in them - reflected in them. Where is the illusion? It is not an illusion that such a place looks spacious; it does look spacious, for things and places look the way they look, the way we see them. The "illusion of space" when one is under no illusion is simply the spacious look of a place.

Among other cases cited is the coin that looks circular from one point of view but elliptical from another. But why not? If it didn't, it wouldn't be a coin, or at least not a circular coin. Where is the illusion? But the coin "problem" is not the ultimate in philosophical canards. As everyone has heard, people in deserts sometimes take mirages for oases. For Ayer a mirage is a "complete hallucination". But the mirage is a well-known type of visible phenomenon not only in deserts but at sea, which anyone with normal vision can see, whether he knows a mirage when he sees one or not. The point about hallucinations is that there is nothing to see.

Having in the first place mixed up all sorts of different things under the heading "illusion", Ayer then goes on to argue that the sense-datum language lays down "an unambiguous convention for the use of words that stand for modes of perception.... freeing us from the verbal problems that develop, as we have seen, out of the ambiguous use of such words in ordinary speech."

(P.26). Undoubtedly the word "illusion" is used in several ways. But what is meant is generally understood quite clearly from the context and situation. So far as the problems are merely verbal, they can be cleared up as Austin has shown in "Sense and Sensibilia". But some of them are not merely verbal: they are problems of reflexive analysis. Ayer claims that there are two senses of "perceive" (by which he means "see"), and in one of them it can be used "in such a way that to say of an object that it is perceived does not entail saying that it exists in any sense at all." The context in which he asserts this (P.21) is a discussion of seeing double or seeing two things when there's only one. There is no such sense of "see" as he alleges.

But this problem is not a verbal one. The problem is to analyse the difference between seeing one man double and seeing twins, a difference of which we are all aware. The analysis of this difference is of importance for understanding how in perception we fix and order things in their spatial relations. In double vision, the two "images" do not have a place in the world, but float in front of things. When we fixate the object they withdraw into it. This fixation is not automatic but "intentional", that is to say, we look at the object. (As this is a matter of considerable interest I have appended to this chapter an illuminating discussion of it by Merleau-Ponty.)

No doubt the word "illusion" is used in several ways. If words were not polyvalent in this way we should need an enormously greater vocabulary than we actually have. It is only when words are taken out of context or apart from the situations in which they are used that their meaning is generally ambiguous, but this "ambiguity" in isolation is precisely what enables

them to be used in many different contexts unambiguously, and to be given if necessary new meanings or new shades of meaning contextually. This is one of the essential things about a language, which Ayer seems to misunderstand no less than Russell, who complains in the "Analysis of Mind" about the vagueness and imprecision of words. The attempt to construct other languages is based partly on this misunderstanding, for the other languages are intended not to have this essential ambiguity. New concepts, new meanings - some of them by stipulative definition - are required by, and for, the development of knowledge, but with "unambiguous" words of the kind desired we could not say anything new without a new word; the old meanings could not be bent or stretched, analogies exploited, or new terms explained.

Ayer offers no reason that holds water for wanting to use a sense-datum language; we can do perfectly well without it and this he admits. But there is a reason which he does not admit for wanting to use such a "language". Ayer almost from the start talks about "perceptions" in the Humean way, and everything might be expected to follow from this. And indeed it does, for, he says, "since in philosophising about perception our main object is to analyse the relationship of our sense-experience to the propositions we put forward concerning material things, it is useful for us to have a terminology that enables us to refer to the contents of our experiences independently of the material things they are taken to present.... But in adopting it we must realise that it does not in itself add to our knowledge of empirical facts, or even make it possible for us to express anything that we could not have expressed without it. At best it enables us only to refer to familiar

facts in a clearer and more convenient way."\* (P.26).

Ayer's account of the object of philosophising about perception in fact proposes one philosophical view of perception, viz., that we have sense-experiences or perceptions which may be considered independently of any supposed world of things, events, processes, happenings, which they might be supposed to "present". In other words what we are aware of in perception is the hypostatized perception or content, not the cat on the mat or the house across the road or the rainbow in the sky or the mist in the valley. Now the "cat" could be a clever simulacrum of a cat, the "house" could be a mere façade or a piece of trompe-l'oeil, the "rainbow" could be the effect of a garden hose, and the "mist" could be smoke. What none of them would be or could be is a perception or content. For each would be seen in a certain direction, in a certain place, or covering a certain area, whatever we saw them as, and whatever we took them to be, standing or sitting where we were, seeing them with our eyes. But whatever they were, they would look as they looked. What would the "content" be?

What could it be but the look? But looks are not independent of embodied beings seeing things in the world, nor can they be intelligibly spoken of as if they were. We do not see cat-like looks, which is what cat-like sense-data would be, but the look of the cat on the mat, which is the way we see the cat from a certain angle, at a certain distance, in a certain light. In the sense-datum doctrine, as in the doctrines from which it descends, looks are hypostatized. And since to talk of seeing is to refer to an embodied

\* The hard fact is that it does not enable us to refer to anything, much less in a clearer way. Ayer gives no example and no example can be given, for reasons which he fails to understand.

being with eyes at a distance from what he sees, and thus to talk the so-called "thing" language, the awareness of contents or sense-data has to be that of a disembodied being. And that is to say, one is not talking about experience as we actually have it at all. That is why there is no sense-datum language. It is only as embodied beings, situated in the world, that we have sense experience. It is not true that the sense-datum language would enable us "to refer to familiar facts in a clearer and more convenient way". It would prevent us from referring to them at all: the "experience" it would refer to would be that of a disembodied awareness of free-floating looks. The alleged examples of sense-datum language are simply ordinary language with the word "sense-datum" jammed incontinently in; they are all quite intelligible except for that word.

One of the fallacies of the whole doctrine is the belief that you can change your description of your actual experience, the very meaning of what you say, while continuing to describe exactly the same experience, that you can, for example, describe your experience of seeing the cat on the mat, there in depth, playing with the ball of wool, without bringing the cat into the description at all. A cat is in Ayer's terms a material thing, and statements about material things "are never conclusively verifiable" (P.239) It is not surprising that one absurd doctrine leads to another, or, if one cares to put the point another way, that one absurd way of talking leads to another. Ayer is asserting, for example, that one cannot conclusively verify that the cat is in the kitchen. But if one were sitting in the kitchen with the cat what could it mean to verify this? One could play with the cat, stroke it, lift it up and hear it purring. Would that be conclusive verification? Not by Ayer's standards. If one took him seriously one would have to suppose

that he didn't know what a cat was, what "cat" meant. The only sense in which one would verify that the cat was in the kitchen would be - if one did not know - to go to the kitchen and see that it was there. But if one took Ayer seriously, it could never be "conclusively verified" that it was the kitchen one had gone to, nor that one had entered by the doorway.

What does he mean by verification of a statement about a material thing? Entailment by a set of statements about sense-data. Since no finite set of statements about sense-data can ever formally entail a statement about a material thing, such a statement can never be conclusively verified. And here we return to the secret *raison d'être* of the whole doctrine: the traditional sensationalist belief that there are incorrigible data of sense or perception, which are what they are and what they appear to be, and to which - related in various ways - all that we call the world of sense-experience is reducible. This view is open to all the objections I have mentioned in connection with Hume. Ayer tries to meet some of them by dint of great liberality in admitting characteristics of experience as characteristics of sense-data. But the case is the same as with Hume. When Hume talks of perceptions without any examples it is obviously not things he is talking about; but when he gives examples, it turns out to be things after all, at least part of the time.

In Ayer's case, the root of the trouble is the insensate desire for certainty of a totally misconceived kind. The model of what is certain is what is logically true. Since statements of matters of fact are not logically true, he seems to think he can approach the desired ideal by means of "incorrigible" statements which would entail them. But there is no finite set



of such statements, or of situations in which "favourable" or "unfavourable" sense-data would be sensed. This is plainly not an account of how we find out if the cat is in the kitchen and can on occasion be quite certain that it is. But is it meant to be? The only answer is: it is and it isn't. It is founded on a dogma about the nature of sense-experience, and therefore has to be such an account and nothing else. But the dogma is masquerading as just another way of talking which is philosophically more convenient, so it is nothing so vulgar as an assertion of how I "know" this is a typewriter I'm tapping, or that the cat is in the kitchen.

I come now to what may be called Ayer's ontological proof of the existence of sense-data, which fairly takes the philosophical biscuit. There is alleged to be no question whether sense-data exist or not, or whether things exist or not, but only whether there is a good reason to use the alleged sense-datum language to talk about experience. How then can Ayer paradoxically permit himself to talk as if there were indubitably sense-data, but not indubitably things? Because this is so by definition. We are aware of sense-data and sense-data exist, because our being aware of them and their existence is part of what Ayer has made "sense-datum" mean. He sets out to make them as different as possible from things, to avoid confusion with things and the alleged confusion which arises out of common discourse about things. And in particular he insists that they cannot be said to exist unsensed.

"Accordingly," he says, "I find it advisable to make it a necessary as well as a sufficient condition of the existence of sense-data that they should in fact be sensed." The ontological argument was never as crude as this: Sense-data exist, because I have defined them as existent. "It is inconceivable," says Ayer, "that any sense-datum should not be sensed veridically,

since it has been made self-contradictory to say of an experienced sense-datum that it does not exist or that it does not really have the properties it appears to have." One might suppose that at least the experiencing or sensing of the sense-data was contingent, the point of contact, so to speak, with reality. But no. By definition we do experience them, and they are what we sense or experience. If one were naive enough to ask what it means to sense or experience or be aware of, as distinct from seeing, hearing, touching, moving about, handling, scrutinising, examining, etc., there is no answer except that we've decided not to talk that way. Whenever we would normally say that we see something, however, we are by definition aware of sense-data.

Now in ordinary usage seeing is one way of being aware of something; our awareness of it is our seeing it, and what we are aware of is what we see. If we were aware of visual sense-data in the same sense of "aware", then what would be described in the sense-datum language, if that were possible, would be neither more nor less than what we see as we see it. If not, "being aware" cannot mean what it commonly means. It would have to be a mode of awareness entirely unknown to us. Disembodied awareness.

#### Note

##### Double vision and fixation

It should be noted that in what follows Merleau-Ponty is arguing first against the view that fixation of the single object occurs automatically, and not by looking. His "phenomenal body" corresponds to what I have called the embodied subject or one's embodiment.

"When I look into the distance and, for example, one of my fingers placed near my eyes projects its image on non-symmetrical points of my retinae, the disposition of the images on the retinae cannot be the cause of the movement of fixation which puts an end to the diplopia. For, as has been pointed out, the disparity of the images does not exist in itself. My finger forms its image on a certain area of my left retina and on an area of the right retina which is not symmetrical with the first. But the symmetrical area of the right retina is also filled with visual excitations; the distribution of the stimuli on the two retinae is only unsymmetrical from the standpoint of a subject comparing the two constellations and identifying them. On the retinae themselves, considered as objects, these are merely two incomparable groups of stimuli. It will be replied perhaps that, without a movement of fixation, these two groups cannot be superimposed, nor give way to vision of something, and in this sense their presence alone creates a state of disequilibrium. But this is precisely to admit what we are trying to prove: that the vision of a single object is not the simple result of fixation, that it is anticipated in the very act of fixation, or that, as has been said, the fixation of the look is a "prospective activity". For my look to turn on the near objects and to concentrate the eyes on them, it must feel the diplopia as a disequilibrium or as imperfect vision and must orient itself towards the single object as the resolution of this tension and the achievement of vision. 'One must look in order to see'. The unity of the object in binocular vision does not result then from some third person process which finally produces a single image by running together the two monocular images. When one passes from diplopia to normal vision, the single object replaces the two images and

is visibly not the simple superimposition of them: it is of another order, incomparably more solid than them. The two images of diplopia are not amalgamated in a single one in binocular vision and the unity of the object is indeed intentional. But - this is the point - it is not notional (or conceptual). One passes from diplopia to the single object, not by an inspection of the mind, but when the two eyes cease to function each on its own and are used as a single organ by a single look. It is not the epistemological subject who carries out the synthesis, it is the body when it pulls itself together and makes for the single term of its movement by every means, and when a single intention is born in it with the phenomenon of synergia. We withdraw the synthesis from the objective body only to give it to the phenomenal body, that is to say to the body in so far as it projects around itself a certain "milieu", in so far as its "parts" are known dynamically to each other and its receptors are disposed in such a way as to make possible by their synergia the perception of the object. In saying that this intentionality is not a thought or idea, we mean that it is not effected in the transparency of consciousness and that it takes for granted all the latent knowledge my body has of itself. Supported by the prelogical unity of the corporeal schema, the perceptual synthesis no more possesses the secret of the object than that of one's own body, and that is why the perceived object is always given as transcendent, why the synthesis appears to be carried out on the object itself, in the world, and not at this metaphysical point which is the thinking subject; it is in this that the perceptual synthesis differs from the intellectual. When I pass from diplopia to normal vision, I am not only conscious of seeing with the two eyes the same object, I am con-

scious of progressing towards the object itself and of having finally its presence in the flesh. The monocular images wandered vaguely in front of things, they had no place in the world, and suddenly they withdraw towards a certain place in the world and are swallowed up, like phantoms at daybreak, into the place they came out of. The binocular object absorbs the monocular images and it is in it that the synthesis is carried out and in its clarity that they are recognised in the end as appearances of this object."

(Phénoménologie de la Perception. X  
Le Sentir, P.267-269.)

Chapter 16

LANGUAGE AND EXPERIENCE

The attempt to tear language and experience apart is based on a radical misunderstanding both of the nature of language and of the nature of experience, or perhaps one should say on a decision to ignore their nature. But their nature will out: it keeps emerging in little words like "now" and "then" and "up" and "down", and in bigger words like "visual field". We know what these words mean by being embodied as we are. For our language is that of embodied subjects, as is all our experience. Language is as it is because experience is as it is. If it were not so, languages would not be translatable. The "sense-datum" language is not translatable, for it is neither about what we experience, nor about our experience of it; if it were, it would be otiose.

To say that the boot is on the other foot, that experience is as it is because language is as it is, is to make, however, a point of essential importance. The language which we learn is, like the world into which we are born, already there before us, incorporating categories and meanings through which we perceive and understand it, making sense of things, distinguishing, sorting out, and relating. Our world is a spoken world, for to learn a language is to learn to make sense of the world, to learn the sorts of things in their relations, to recognise the "such" in the "this". Our primary experience of language is of our native language, the language we are born to, as speakers and listeners, as embodied subjects who say with



the tongue in their native tongue what they see with their eyes or do with their hands, for whom whatever is can be said, and for whom what is difficult to say is difficult to understand. To know it is to be possessed of it as a bodily skill, to be articulate, to have words at one's command.

When I move my fingers, it is not like moving a pen; it is with my fingers I move the pen but I do not move my fingers with anything. Similarly, I do not move my vocal organs with anything. But with them I make the sound. My voicing the sound, my movements of the tongue, teeth and lips, is my saying the words, and my saying the words is my meaning. My meaning, true or false, is on my lips. To speak the truth is bodily to vocalise it. My having the words is my power of expression. In utterance, unstudied utterance, one does not think of the words, one simply means aloud, voicing meaning. One's native language is a mode of bodily being, one's power to say. We use it in unstudied utterance, only in the peculiar sense that we use our voice or hands or arms or eyes, or use our skill at the piano, not, that is, in the sense that we use the piano. To speak is to mean with the voice, to voice meaning, to make one's meaning public.

The language is the common inheritance. But to enter upon it and possess it is to incarnate it as one's own power of expression, to mean in it. Because it is essentially common to articulate beings, it is easy to regard it as a thing with a life and development of its own, a great living body like the body politic or the nation, something as it were apart from any one person. And a word can be regarded as independent of the meaning on

anyone's lips and of the meaning that anyone hears. But language in itself is only the deposit, as it were, of acts of meaning, for of course, words acquired or were given their meanings, as today they are given new meanings.

The meaning is both in the word and in the thing, both in the sentence and in the fact. We do not usually say a thing has meaning, for the meaning of a thing is simply what it is. But what it is is also the meaning of the word. What a cat is, is what "cat" means. The universal is in re, but also a re, in verbo. Whatever we see, touch, grasp, hear, or move about, is both "this" and "such", tode and totovde. The universal is in re. But it is also in verbo. To hear the sound "cat" or to see the marks "cat" on a blackboard, in isolation, is not simply to hear a sound or to see marks, but to hear the word or read it, and this is to hear or read the meaning of "cat". In one's native language, every thing, fact, relation, situation, experience is essentially expressible. What is seen with the eye can be uttered with the tongue. In our native language we do not put what we see, or think or mean into words: we mean what we see or think, vocally, our meaning is in the words we utter. To think it out beforehand is simply to mean silently, to say to oneself. This is the point often made by saying: "I don't know what I mean till I say it." How could it be otherwise?

When we read a book, we see the meaning on the page as we read: we do not see marks and interpret their meaning. The meaning is not in the margin or somewhere off the page, but there on the page, from line to line and page to page accumulating. It is characteristic of the whole sensationalist account of sense-experience and its watered-down successors that reading

does not count as sense-experience, does not even count as seeing. Reading, in the intellectualist view which is happily at ease with the sensation-  
alist account of perception, is an operation of the intellect following  
the operations of another mind by means of signs and symbols. After all,  
there are only black marks on a white page: that is all there is to see:  
what the illiterate sees is what we all see. But are we talking about ex-  
perience or aren't we? One has to try to see just the marks. (It can  
be done if your nose is near enough to the paper.) But surely, it may be  
said, if you want to call reading seeing, it is at least a very exceptional,  
peculiar kind of seeing. But is it? Did you ever, I reply, see a face  
without an expression? Did you not "read" the expression?

Though one might not think it, sight is regularly asserted by sensation-  
alists and their descendants to be the most important sense for those who  
have it. I can only suppose that while they are thinking about what they  
call sense-experience, they happily forget about language, which can be left  
to lexicographers, philologists, logicians and phoneticians. Hearing a  
delightful story, the voice of doom from the judicial bench, another voice  
"si rauque et d'amour si voilée", songs, peals of laughter, even the simplest  
bit of information indispensable for the ordinary conduct of life - none of  
that counts as sense-experience. What we really hear are just sounds, and  
sounds are events which occur when a pressure wave within a certain range  
of frequencies impinges on the tympanum, etc. Since that is all we get,  
what we think we hear is not what we really hear. To explain what we think  
we hear, there is the unconscious interpretation story and a variety of other  
philosophical fictions.

People take language for granted in precisely the way they take their own

bodies for granted. Being articulate is part of being embodied. One must already be articulate to say anything about language, objectively, scientifically, as one must see to make any observation. The embodied subject is a priori in this as in other respects. The physical world, the world conceived in the terms of physics, chemistry and physiology was assumed in the old sensationalist account of sense-experience, and regarded in effect as what there really was "in itself". The parallel mistake with language is to try to account for our experience, or alleged experience, as speakers and listeners, in terms derived from the objective study of language, as sui generis, in itself.

To understand Galileo's experiment with bodies on an inclined plane, one must already know what bodies are from having seen bodies and inclined planes from having seen slopes (and walked up them or slid down them). No subsequent development of physical theory can tell us what our actual experience of bodies and slopes is - we know that already. Physical definitions are operational - not "what the dimension is" but "how to measure it". We could never learn what length was from physics. But we know what length is: we see the lengths of things and the farness and nearness of things. One must be a body to do physics, to know any physical fact or to test any physical hypothesis. Only for an embodied being could physics be about anything.

Now the same, or very much the same, goes for the study of language, in any objective or quasi-objective way. One must already be articulate, be a talking and listening being, and know what meaning is, what it is to mean, by having meant, by saying, by meaning aloud. The various types of objective

study of language take meaning for granted, but some try to impose their conclusions upon it and to assert what our actual experience of meaning must be. (Russell's remarks on meaning in "The Analysis of Mind" or Frege's in "The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge" are as good examples as any.) Meinung, in effect, is reduced to Sinn and Bedeutung. But it is only for one who means (meinen) that there can be either Sinn or Bedeutung, that there can be a language. To say in "objective", "scientific" terms what "I mean" or "my meaning" is, is no more possible than to say in objective, scientific terms what "I see" or "I am happy" means.

Chapter 17

GOODMAN AND THE CARDINAL BIRD

If one may generalise about the Vienna circle, their common standpoint was essentially that of a neutral monism similar to Russell's, founded upon the doctrine of sensations which they inherited from Ernst Mach. The idea of a logical construction was intimately related to that of a unified science. In the logical language, physical statements would be translatable or transformable into psychological statements, or, as Schlick put it; "propositions concerning bodies are transformable into equivalent propositions concerning the occurrence of sensations in accordance with laws". The unification of science in this way was philosophy.

For a metaphysic so grandiose and ambitious, one must, I think, go back to the previous pan-logicist, Hegel. The reason why Hegel's "logic" is not logic in the accepted modern sense is that it includes the real, the existent, that is to say, it is not formal logic. The dialectic is, as it were, a deduction of the real. Kierkegaard's criticism, unfair as he often is to Hegel, is no more than the statement and re-statement of the point that there can be a logical system but there cannot be a system of existence. Existence cannot be deduced. There is no reason why anything exists. (It does not much matter whether "existence" is understood in Kierkegaard's special sense of individual subjectivity or simply in the sense in which it is said that there are things in the world.)

Among the members of the Vienna circle, Schlick understood this point very well. A body of established physical law and theory can be reconstructed



as a deductive logical system. Though its whole justification is as a means of prediction, as a logical system it has no necessary connection whatsoever with what there is or what is the case, or with the inductive observations whereby the laws it incorporates were established. It is a formal system. Its relation to reality is another matter. It is, in Schlick's words, "a means of finding one's way among the facts." ("The Foundation of Knowledge" in "Logical Positivism" ed. A.J. Ayer, P.226).

Reason, as Meyerson says, has only one means of explaining what does not come from itself - to reduce it to nothing. The general theory of relativity, for example, is a deductive system in which the physically discontinuous is assimilated to the spatial continuum, the existent (the physical) to the formal (the geometrical). But, Meyerson points out, this rationalisation can never be complete - the real cannot be deduced. The theory does not attempt to explain why one "track" of space is at one point and not at another. This is simply accepted as a fact, which is expressed in ordinary language when we note the presence of a mass or an electrical field. The theory assumes this and shows how the phenomena of gravitation follow. In other words, the explanation is confined to the "essence" of the phenomenon, and leaves aside completely the order of existence, whether objective physical existence or the existence of Einstein. There is no reason to believe that Einstein was so foolish as to think otherwise. (See P.145 "La Déduction Relativiste", by E. Meyerson. Payot, 1925)

But logical constructions or re-constructions of the world are founded on the contrary assumption and are in this respect far more like Hegel's system than Einstein's. The system must include its author. Hegel's

system is meant to, but as Kierkegaard said, he is like a man who builds an enormous castle and lives in a shack close by, or who professes one world and draws his salary in another. The joke is crude, for the point it makes is crude, but nonetheless inescapable: Hegel's very death pangs from the cholera must have their place and meaning in the system, if it is what it purports to be. Precisely the same applies to Russell's or Carnap's vastly different systems. What we call "Napoleon" according to Russell is a logical construction out of sensations. So, therefore, is what we call "Russell". This is the essential point of Russell's denial of consciousness or subjectivity, and his attempt to treat these words as the trivial outcome of certain linguistic habits. The case is the same with Carnap's "Subjektlos" construction of the world, which is also essentially a neutral monism.

In "The Logical Construction of the World", Carnap's first problem is that of the data or ground elements which are to be values of the variables, whereby alone his construction can purport to be not merely a logical construction but a logical construction of the world. Acceptance of his system depends upon acceptance of his argument for the subjectless Erlebnis which he takes for "quasi-analysis".

Goodman has an interesting discussion of this question in "The Structure of Appearance", in which he argues that for the purpose of a logical construction what is given, in the sense of being a "raw datum", is irrelevant. Goodman seems to me to be right as opposed to Carnap, but he seems to me to be wrong in a more fundamental way owing to a certain preconception about sense-experience which he shares with many other empiricists. His own

suggested system takes "qualia" as its atoms, and includes places and times among the qualia. In no sense are these supposed to be the units "in which experience is originally given." Other systems with other units are entirely admissible, and one system could be preferred to another only on grounds of utility. There is no question of the qualia "floating free" of concreta; all concreta contain qualia and all erlebs contain concreta. It is pointless to ask which sort of unit comes first or which is really fundamental. If the question is "which way experience is packaged on original delivery", says Goodman, "I have no idea what criteria would be applied in seeking an answer." A constructional system is not necessarily intended as "an epistemological history." ("The Structure of Appearance", Pp. 150-151).

Now Goodman is certainly right to reject any notion of "raw" or "original" experience but the worst difficulty is one which is raised no less by his system than by Carnap's. It is the difficulty of knowing what is meant by a quale or a concretum or an erleb, a difficulty akin to that of knowing what Ayer means by a sense-datum. It should be specified in the ordinary language so that there is no doubt what is referred to. But this is simply not done, and the reason again lies in the nature of language and experience. One can talk about the world and anything whatever in the world, or one can talk of one's experience of this and that, but one cannot talk as if there were no distinction between experience and what is experienced, or between what is experienced as it is experienced and what is experienced as it actually is. Now this is not a matter of epistemological history or of "which way experience is packaged on original delivery" - what that would mean is as obscure to me as it is to Goodman. It is a matter of the way we have

it now.

If anything could be said to be packaged it would be what was experienced not the experience of it, and this is precisely the distinction which Goodman does not make. As in all such systems, experience is identified with what is experienced. The qualia, concreta and erlebs are not what we see or hear, nor yet our hearing and seeing, but both or neither. It is another "subjektlos" system, and again the crude question is whether it includes its author. Now Goodman almost certainly would want to deny his commitment to any view about the nature of experience. It is necessary therefore to show that he has such a view and what this view is. For this purpose I take his discussion of the question of "epistemological priority" in connection with the respective claims of physicalism and phenomenism, which, as he remarks, is badly confused.

"The claim is that one basis corresponds more closely than another to what is directly apprehended or immediately given, that one more nearly than the other represents naked experience as it comes to us - prior to analysis, inference, interpretation, conceptualisation. Now one may certainly ask whether a given description is true of what is experienced; but here the further question is whether one or the other of two true descriptions more faithfully describes what is experienced as it is experienced - and this I have some difficulty in understanding. What I saw a moment ago might be described as a moving patch of red, as a cardinal bird, or as the thirty-seventh bird in the tree this morning; and all these descriptions may be true. But the phenomenist seems to hold that what I saw I saw as a moving patch of red, which I then interpreted as a glimpse of a cardinal bird. The physicalist seems to hold that I saw it as a cardinal bird, and

only by analysis reached the description of it as a moving patch of red. Both apparently agree (since I made no count) that what I saw I did not see as the thirty-seventh bird in the tree this morning. Now just what is in question here? Let me try to formulate it...

"... The criterion suggested here is apparently that what I see, I see as what I know it to be at the moment I see it. Did I then see (it)... as more than 5000 miles from China, as weighing less than Aristotle, etc... surely this formulation will not do.

"Perhaps, then,... to say I saw a red thing is nearer to my raw experience than to say I saw a red bird, and this in turn is nearer than to say I saw the eighth red bird on the tree this morning. In that case I am more faithful to my experience if I describe what I saw as a vertebrate than as a bird, and faithful to the ultimate degree if I describe it as a cow-or-non-cow." (P.103 et seq. "The Structure of Appearances".)

Goodman's purpose is to show the difficulty of "rating perceptible individuals on a scale of immediacy", and to show that the claim of greater immediacy for either a physicalistic or a phenomenalist basis is not easily sustained. He is entirely successful in this. But he goes on to say that "an economic and well-constructed system of either sort" will do and that it need not be further justified in terms of "some subtle epistemological or metaphysical hierarchy". In applying the terms "phenomenal" and "physical", he says, he is not attempting to distinguish the immediate and the non-immediate: "For example, the two-dimensional field of vision is clearly different from three-dimensional physical space; a change of position in either may or may not be accompanied by a change of position in the other." And this fairly

gives the show away.

Goodman entirely confuses the meaningless question about "naked experience" with an entirely different question: "whether one or the other of two true descriptions more faithfully describes what is experienced as it is experienced", and this he says he has some difficulty in understanding. This difficulty stems from the failure to make the ordinary distinction between what there is, or what is the case, and our experience of it at any particular time. What is the case can only be known by experience, but a true statement of someone's experience need not be a true statement of what is the case. If I see an attendant in Madame Tussaud's as one of the exhibits, this is a true description of what I see as I see it, but not of what I see as it really is - not a waxwork but a man. I see something all right, but I see it as a waxwork when it is actually a man. There is no difficulty in understanding this.

Now Goodman holds that a true description is a description of what objectively, empirically, is the case, and he holds further that such a description can be given either in physicalist or in phenomenalist terms as he describes these. But this is not so, for different sorts of descriptions are in question - though none of them is a description of occurrences in a two-dimensional "field of vision." One might say the phenomenalist goes for the looks of things, while the physicalist goes for the things. Ordinary language, since experience is as it is, goes for both; a thing seen in depth is seen from an angle, looking as it looks, and if it looks very odd then it looks very odd, whether or not it is in any sense odd or unusual. The question is what one means, what one is describing.



Let me mention a few of the commonest distinctions. There is first the distinction between the way a house looks from here, the house as you see it from here and what you see it as - an oblong house. What you see it as may not be what it is, e.g., the attendant seen as a waxwork, or a trompe-l'oeil "door" in a wall seen as a door, or a mere façade seen as the front of a house - in all of which cases the thing looks like what you see it as. But you may see a thing as what in fact it is, but looking like something else, e.g., a bare tree looking like a bunch of snakes writhing in the air, or a man looking like an old woman. All these expressions have to be understood in a particular context, for often one can be substituted for another, for example, I might say I see the tree as a bunch of snakes, when I mean "looking like a bunch of snakes." If you said of some porcine character that you saw him as a great fat pig, this would not mean that you failed to recognise him as a man. Again there are some situations where to say that something looks like a man and to say you see it as a man would amount to the same. The context and situation are essential to understanding what is meant.

Now Goodman's assumption is that all true descriptions are descriptions of what is the case objectively; they are all empirical descriptions, descriptions of what is observed. But this is not so. Descriptions of a thing are empirical; descriptions of seeing it or of how one sees it are not. One does not see or observe one's seeing, what one sees is the thing. One knows that there is a cat on the mat by seeing the cat on the mat. One does not know one sees it by seeing or observing one's seeing it. Observing is the condition of making an empirical, objective statement. Such statements are made about what is observed or observable. One does not observe

one's observing, one's hearing or feeling or thinking, in a word, one's experience. It is by experience that one determines what is the case, objectively. Objective statements are not statements about one's experience, but statements of what is the case in the world.

To misunderstand this is to misunderstand the nature of scientific experiment and discovery. It proceeds on the a priori assumption that there is a world which is as it is independently of anyone's knowing it as it is, but which can be known by observation and experiment. That is the very meaning of discovery. The looks of things or the way you see things or I see things are not objects of scientific determination and discovery. They look the way they look, but the way they look to me may be vastly different from the way they look to you. Looks are not objective. They may be described and they may be depicted but they cannot be objectively determined by measurement. Nor can a collection of looks constitute a thing.

Underlying Goodman's difficulty is the sensationalist heritage. He rightly realises that nothing can intelligibly be said about raw data of perception. But he assumes that there are, or were, such data. Since we cannot describe the data, all we can describe is what is the case in the world, which we may do in many different ways; all such statements will be empirical and will be true or false by exactly the same criteria. If he protests that he is not saying that what we describe is what is the case in the world, the answer is: Right, if you want to have it that way, what we describe truly or falsely is subjective experience. For he makes no distinction. It is all one to him. But "A cardinal bird flew in a

south westerly direction across the garden at 11.36 a.m." would not be a description of my experience as I sat reading and something red caught my eye. For Goodman there is an inordinate difficulty in describing present experience as we have it. But such descriptions are among the most frequent and commonplace in the language. It is impossible to believe that Goodman does not use them with perfect ease when he is not writing books, or that his descriptions are not effortlessly true descriptions.

A birdwatcher looking for cardinal birds and who knows what they look like, might say as he sees the red flash across the garden, "There's one!", if that is the way such a bird looks in flight. He may of course be wrong. He would follow it up and try to get a proper sight of it with his binoculars. I, who don't know what a cardinal bird looks like in flight or otherwise, might say: "What was that red thing flashing across?" And this, in the form of a question, would express my experience better than the statement that I saw something red flashing across, for it says not only that, but that I wonder what it was. "What's that?" is what you say when, for example, some sudden movement arrests your attention, but you couldn't see it properly, couldn't get a proper look at it. Isn't this a perfectly familiar experience? If the bird landed on a tree in view you would scrutinise it, try to see as much as possible. But if it flashed across and disappeared, you would be "left hanging", unsatisfied, and "What was that?" would simply express this. If you were feeling drowsy, you might not be very curious, unless someone else roused your attention. A true description of your experience then would be something like: "Yes, I did see something red there, but I was just dropping off." What this describes

is not a cardinal bird in flight, as it might be described by an ornithologist. There is simply no question of that; it is not that sort of description, for you do not know what it was you saw - and you know very well you don't know - you didn't have a chance to get a look at it. But there is no question either of naked or raw experience, whatever that would be, nor of epistemological history, whatever that would be. Simply a question of your actual experience, easily and truly expressible in unstudied utterance.

Goodman's problem arises because he does not distinguish between what objectively happens in the world and how you experience what is within your purview at any particular time and place, in your situation, your mood, with your preoccupations and interests. He is troubled philosophically by the same preconceptions about sense-experience as those whose views he is criticising; he realises, as some of them have failed to do, that there is no question of what is really or originally given, that this notion is vacuous; but the only sort of true description he will admit is an objective description of what it really is that is observed, and there are lots of them. But as everyone knows, there are innumerable cases where we don't know what "it" objectively is, and that is why we ask questions. If we glimpse something red that is our experience, but we don't know what the something is. And that is the difference between a description of our perceptual experience and what is objectively the case.

On Goodman's view, what becomes of what we see as we see it? And what becomes of what we see it as, whether it is or is not what we see it as? Nothing, it would seem. Nothing can be truly said about that. It is not

surprising that Goodman's own qualia are hard to identify either with anything or any quality of things in the world, or with any characteristic of our experience of them, since the distinction is simply not made. His construction is Subjektlos, like Carnap's and Russell's.

There is one fundamental point about our perceptual experience on which I have touched several times, and which is worth making again in connection with Goodman's rejection of "naked" or "raw" experience. It is that when we catch a glimpse of anything, as for example the patch of red flashing across the garden, we look at it to make out what it is - to determine it as such-and-such in the world. Perception has its teleology, as Merleau-Ponty says, its end is the thing "in person" or "in the flesh". It passes from the indeterminate to the determinate.

Now much that is described in the phenomenalist way - "a patch of red" or "a red patch moving across" - is a merely transitory stage in the progress of perception to its end, or, if you like, in the emergence of the determinate thing. It is not what we finally see, for seeing is the end of looking; it is what we look at, seek with the gaze, before we have seen it properly and got a good sight of it. It is nothing determinate, but indeterminate and cannot therefore be described except as "moving red", that is to say, not as anything in the world, for among the things in the world there are no mere "moving reds," discarnate qualities whizzing about. A moving red what? The answer to that is what our looking is after.

Experience of the indeterminate is common but the point is that it is entirely artificial to attempt to describe the indeterminate, for to attempt to describe anything seriously is first to take a good look and determine it,

see what you can of it. Things themselves, we assume, are in themselves indeterminate, but as Merleau-Ponty argues very powerfully, they are first constituted as determinate by the teleology of perception passing by looking from the indeterminate to the determinate. What is determinate, he argues, is essentially what has been determined. Though we see the green book at the edge of the desk vaguely, we assume that it is not in itself vague, for to look at it would be to see it properly, to see its hard, firm contours. When our eyes leave it, roving over and dominating the things in our purview, having been once determined, it remains determinate for us in itself, and even behind our back, or when we go out of the room.



Chapter 18

CAUSAL EXPLANATION AND THE MECHANIST BOGY

The primordial thesis, unreasoned, unargued, on which all enquiry and investigation and discovery is founded, is that there is a world and that *it* is in itself, independent of our being in it, and of our seeing anything of it or knowing anything about it. To ask "what is the world?" is to ask "what is it that there is?". All we can say of the world is what we know about this or that aspect of it. But there is always more. It is perfectly true that when we speak of the world we do not know what we are talking about, as we do when we speak of the dining room table or the United States or the House of Commons. The world is not an object and not determinable as an object; what is known or what is determined or determinable is in the world. It is by virtue of the primordial thesis of the world that we always believe there is more to know, that there are facts, not yet, but to be, known.

All our experience incorporates this thesis. We find what is there, already there, waiting as it were to be scrutinised, examined, discovered, or used and shaped for our ends. It is given in the sense that we do not invent it - that is the only sense in which there is a datum. What we make, we make of what we find. What we see is to be further explored and determined. To see anything is to begin, at least, to determine what it is. The thesis that knowledge is possible is no less primordial, unargued, and unreasoned, than the thesis of the world: it is in every look we cast on anything, every

scrutiny, every question. The thesis of the world and the thesis that it is to be known are not matters of knowledge, but presupposed in all enquiry and all discovery of what is the case, the way things are.

Hume realised this and his doctrine of natural belief is an expression of it. But while recognising its non-rational character, he attempted to give an account of it in naturalistic terms, terms which presuppose it. Some of his successors have tried to treat the world as consisting of permanent possibilities of sensations. Gilbert Ryle is not the philosopher of whom one would most readily think in this connection, but the dispositional analysis of properties in the form in which he presents it leads, I think, straight into this position.

"There are," says Ryle, "at least two quite different senses in which an occurrence is said to be 'explained'; and there are correspondingly at least two quite different senses in which we ask 'why' it occurred and two quite different sense in which we say that it happened 'because' so and so was the case. The first sense is the causal sense. To ask why the glass broke is to ask what caused it to break, and we explain, in this sense, the fracture of the glass when we report that a stone hit it. The 'because' clause in the explanation reports an event, namely the event which stood to the fracture of the glass as cause to effect.

"But very frequently we look for and get explanations of occurrences in another sense of 'explanation'. We ask why the glass shattered when struck by the stone and we get the answer that it was because the glass was brittle. Now 'brittle' is a disposit-

ional adjective; that is to say, to describe the glass as brittle is to assert a general hypothetical proposition about the glass. So when we say that the glass broke when struck because it was brittle, the 'because' clause does not report a happening or a **Cause**; it states a law-like proposition. People commonly say of explanations of this second kind that they give the 'reason' for the glass breaking when struck.

"How does the law-like general hypothetical proposition work? It says, roughly, that the glass, if sharply struck or twisted, etc., would not dissolve or stretch or evaporate but fly into fragments. The matter of fact that the glass did at a particular moment fly into fragments, when struck by a particular stone, is explained, in this sense of 'explain', when the first happening, namely the impact of the stone, satisfies the protasis of the general hypothetical proposition, and when the second happening, namely the fragmentation of the glass, satisfies its apodosis." (The Concept of Mind, P.88-89).

"There is," says Ryle, "at our disposal an indefinitely wide range of dispositional terms for talking about things, living creatures and human beings. Some of these can be applied indifferently to all sorts of things; for example, some pieces of metal, some fishes, and some human beings weigh 140 lb., are elastic and combustible, and all of them, if left unsupported, fall at the same rate of acceleration. Other dispositional terms can be applied only to certain kinds of things: 'hibernates', for example, can be applied

with truth or falsity only to living creatures, and 'Tory' can be applied with truth or falsity only to non-idiotic, non-infantile, non-barbarous human beings..." (P.125-126).

According to Ryle's account, if we ask why the glass shattered when struck and receive the answer "because it was brittle", this means "if it were struck it would shatter". Since ex hypothesi we have just seen this happening, in what sense could this be said to be an explanation of any sort? (This would be like Molière's "vertu dormitive".) It is true that if glass is brittle it will shatter when struck with a suitable thing, and this is the main way in which we discover that things are brittle. But to ascribe this property to it is not to say anything about how the property is discovered. To say it shattered because it was brittle is to say it shattered because it was a certain sort of thing: to say it was brittle is to give a causal explanation of its shattering no less than to say it shattered because it was struck, or because the stone was hard, heavy, and travelling fast, or because any other condition of its shattering was fulfilled. There are not two different senses of "because", only one of which is causal, but several causes or causal conditions of the glass shattering. The "because" clause does report a cause in each case. People commonly use the word "reason" instead of "cause", whether the cause in question is a property or an occurrence, but this is of no special importance or significance.

The difference between tough glass and brittle glass lies in their molecular structure and the cause of this may be said to lie in the process of manufacture. This is no less a cause of glass breaking or not breaking

when a stone hits it than is the throwing or impact of the stone. People who know nothing of molecular structure take brittleness to be a property of glass, and suppose that there is an inherent difference between tough and brittle materials which causes the one to shatter and the other not to shatter when struck. Similarly, it was assumed when the first Comet jet exploded in mid-air that there was some defect of the fuselage which caused it to disintegrate. This was found to be what is called metal-fatigue, a condition which develops under prolonged stress in certain alloys.

The point may be illustrated by another example. The cause of an explosion in a factory might be said to be a cigarette end, or it might be said to be someone's putting the explosive material, months before the event, in the place where the cigarette end lands. In an enquiry into the causes of an accidental explosion, they would equally be regarded as causes of the explosion. The dangerous condition of the factory, the disposition of the factory to explode, would be simply the explosive lying in that place. Its being there and the cigarette end being thrown would be equally causes of the explosion. To say the glass broke because it was brittle is analogous to saying the factory exploded because it was in a dangerous condition: in the one case we may know what the condition was in some detail, and in the other not, but it is correctly assumed by people who know nothing of the nature of brittleness that there is something about the glass which makes it break easily. But for this, physical and chemical enquiry would have remained in their infancy. No one would have asked what the difference was between glass that broke easily and glass that didn't, for they would have thought that was the difference, and there was no more to be said.

Now if the enquiry into the causes of such commonplace events as the breaking of glass be carried further, there are of course many other causal conditions with which everyone is familiar. It depends for example upon thickness and weight in relation to the missile. What the law-like general proposition says "roughly" is too rough - it masks the fact that the weight of the glass, whereby it is where it is and not floating around, can with as much or as little reason be considered a dispositional property. And with as much or as little reason, it can be said that to say the glass is heavy is to state one or more general hypothetical propositions. And so for its mass, volume, thickness, roughness or smoothness, transparency and so on.. To say the glass broke because it was brittle is a statement of exactly the same type as to say that it did not break because it was thick. Thickness happens to be a property which is visible to the naked eye. But no one supposes that all present properties whereby the present glass is glass, are visible or evident at a glance.

Properties are causal conditions of happenings, events, processes and behaviour and no one could doubt it. To say they are dispositional is another way of saying this, and perfectly harmless if this is understood. Explanation in terms of properties is causal explanation. But if one says that "to describe the glass as brittle is to assert a general hypothetical proposition about the glass" one has to say that to describe the glass as anything whatever is to assert a general hypothetical proposition. What, then, is the glass about which these general hypothetical propositions are asserted? The only way of saying what the glass is, is to say what properties it has. Its having these properties is its being glass; apart from them it is not glass, but, if anything, something else. To say it is glass is to say it has the properties of glass. If this is to assert



general hypothetical propositions, to say it is glass is to do so, and to say that there is any glass in the world is to do so.

Ryle's view of dispositional properties as translatable into hypothetical propositions is inseparable from the view that any statement asserting what is not at present observable by the speaker is reducible to, and indeed identifiable with, one or more hypothetical propositions specifying the conditions or method of verification. It remains to show that this is not the meaning of such statements, but that such statements mean precisely what they appear to mean: that such-and-such is now actually the case, and that they are not really "if...then..." statements.

There is no dispute about how such statements are to be verified. The statement "there is a brown leather arm-chair in the next room" can be verified by going to the next room and seeing if there is such an armchair there. But "There is a brown leather armchair in the next room" does not mean "If I go to the next room, then I shall see, or be in a position to see, a brown leather armchair" or any other statement saying in effect how the first statement is to be verified. For any such statement must specify the place where the observation could be made. Now to say where is to say there is such a place. But places are spatial determinations of what there is at them, or in them, or near the<sup>m</sup>, or far from them, and no place can be mentioned or specified without a reference to something of which it is a spatial determination; all such determinations are relational - "here", "there" and "elsewhere" are all correlative terms. For there to be places and times there has to be a world. When it is stated that there is a brown leather armchair in the next room, what is meant is that now at this moment

there is a room next door and in it such a chair. To ascertain whether this is so, one must go thither from hence. If there were not a world and things in the world, it could not be ascertained, for one would not, to put it crudely, know where to go to make the observation, for the place referred to in the hypothetical could not be said to exist. But the hypothetical proposition assumes the present existence of the next room and whatever is in it. It is because we take the independent existence of the world and everything in it for granted that we can formulate such hypotheticals. And it is because we take the existence of a piece of glass to be the existence of all the properties of the glass that we can formulate any hypothetical proposition about it. It is because it is what it is, or has the properties it has, that it behaves as it does in this or that circumstance. And this is part and parcel of causal explanation whether at the kitchen or at the laboratory level of sophistication.

This is very evident if one takes things which are actually named by their principal dispositional property, for example, high explosives. What constitutes the explosiveness of the explosive is its present <sup>chemical</sup> composition, and if it exploded it would be this no less than the dunt or the match which caused the explosion. It would explode for example because it was T.N.T. To say that it is T.N.T. and that T.N.T. is a high explosive is to describe a present existent. But to describe a present existent and ascribe properties to it is not, as Ryle suggests, to report any occult occurrences behind the scenes, it is to say what sort of stuff it is, what, for example, its chemical composition is. There is nothing

occult about this.

There is no harm, I repeat, in regarding properties as dispositional, if it is remembered that this is to regard them as causal conditions of various types of happenings or events. Now Ryle is concerned to show that "he boasted from vanity" is an explanation of the same type as "the glass broke because it was brittle." If it is, it is a causal explanation as this is understood in the kitchen, the workshop and the laboratory.

"Naturally" says Ryle, "the addicts of the superstition that all true indicative sentences either describe existents or report occurrences will demand that sentences such as 'this wire conducts electricity', or 'John Doe knows French', shall be construed as conveying factual information of the same type as that conveyed by 'this wire is conducting electricity' and 'John Doe is speaking French'. How could the statements be true unless there were something now going on, even though going on, unfortunately, behind the scenes? Yet they have to agree that we do often know that a wire conducts electricity and that individuals know French, without having first discovered any undiscoverable goings on.... Dispositional statements are neither reports of observed or observable states of affairs, nor yet reports of unobserved or unobservable states of affairs." (P.124-125).

One is hard put to it to know who the addicts of the superstition of occult goings on behind the scenes are or were. But dispositional statements do report states of affairs. As I have shown, to say the glass is thick is no less a dispositional statement than to say it is brittle, and to say it broke because it was brittle is a statement of the same type as to say it did not break because it was thick. The dangerous condition of

the factory, again, is the explosive material lying about. If that is not a state of affairs, what is? To say "this wire conducts electricity" may mean that it is commonly used for that purpose. But to say it is a good conductor is to ascribe a property to it, and this is sought in the physical constitution of the wire, and this again is a condition, a causal condition, of conduction. If it were not what it is, e.g. copper, Cu<sub>2</sub>, it would not conduct the current. Its being copper is the causal condition of good conduction on various occasions. But if there is any such wire, it is what it is with all its properties now. Now Ryle has given no reason for supposing that "knowing French" is less a causal condition of speaking French on various occasions than "being Cu<sub>2</sub>" is a causal condition of good conduction on various occasions. Just as the properties of the wire, whereby it is what it is, are causes of its behaving as it does on various occasions and in various circumstances, so John Doe's properties would be causes of his behaving as he does in various circumstances.

This is a view which is widely held by behaviourists, some physiologists, and cyberneticians, and their great virtue as against Ryle is that they are quite clear about what a causal explanation is. Russell in the "Analysis of Mind" is a good case in point. The occurrences which in Ryle's doctrine would verify the general hypothetical propositions correspond to what Russell calls mnemonic phenomena, which are to be explained by mnemonic causal laws. According to this doctrine, the response of an organism to a present stimulus is very often dependent upon the past history of the organism and not merely upon the stimulus: past occurrences in addition to the present stimulus and the present ascertainable conditions of the organism enter into the causation

of the response. (Analysis of Mind, P.77). Russell unfortunately does not make it quite clear that such an account applies not only to the behaviour of organisms but to that of inanimate things. The temper of a steel blade or the tensile strength of a girder may be regarded in the same light. When the blade cuts wood or the girder takes a strain, the present occurrence is the effect in part of the state of the steel and of the processes of manufacture. Its past history determines its present behaviour, as, to quote Russell's example, the burnt child fears the fire.

#### Intelligent machines

Ryle's account of dispositional properties tends to obscure what is meant by causal explanation, and he does not recognise that his account of human dispositions and propensities is essentially causal by the same token as the other dispositions and propensities of things which he cites. My next criticism is closely connected with this. It is that Ryle's concept of a machine or mechanism is quite inadequate. At the end of his chapter on the will, he writes as follows:

"In conclusion, it is perhaps worth while giving a warning against a very popular fallacy. The hearsay knowledge <sup>that everything</sup> in Nature is subject to mechanical laws often tempts people to say that Nature is either one big machine, or else a conglomeration of machines. But in fact there are very few machines in Nature. The only machines that we find are the machines that human beings make, such as clocks, windmills and turbines. There are a very few natural systems which somewhat resemble such machines, namely, such things as solar systems. These

do go on by themselves and repeat indefinitely the same series of movements.... Paradoxical though it may seem, we have to look rather to living organisms for examples in Nature of self-maintaining, routine-observing systems. The movements of the heavenly bodies provided one kind of clock. It was the human pulse that provided the next. Nor is it merely primitive animism which makes native children think of engines as iron horses. There is very little else in Nature to which they are so closely analogous. Avalanches<sup>h</sup> and games of billiards are subject to mechanical laws; but they are not at all like the workings of machines." (The Concept of Mind, P.82).

On the previous page, Ryle has asserted: "Men are not machines, not even ghost-ridden machines. They are men - a tautology which is sometimes worth remembering." But up to the point at which these passages occur there is nothing to support his contention. In the first place, Ryle in effect defines a machine as being man-made of inorganic materials, or at least of materials whose organic character is irrelevant to their function, such as the wood in a windmill. Furthermore, a machine for Ryle repeats indefinitely the same series of movements, the examples being clocks, windmills and turbines. In this sense of course men are not machines. But this is not the sense in which it has been suggested that they are, either by Descartes in suggesting that animals were automata or by a cybernetician such as W.R. Ashby in our own time.

The behaviour of man-made control mechanisms, which are basically electronic computers, was not perhaps very well known in 1949 when Ryle's book



was published. They incorporate negative feed-back mechanisms - a term first coined in the field of telecommunications - of which many had been identified in nature long before such machines were invented, viz., the homeostatic mechanisms in the organism and not least in the human body. It will not do to rule out bio-chemical mechanisms by so defining a mechanism or machine that it cannot be bio-chemical, and this is what Ryle's "paradoxical as it may seem" suggests that he is doing.

Man-made control mechanisms reproduce, and are intended to reproduce some of the characteristic features of human behaviour, but also to improve upon it. Indeed that is the whole point of them. By all the criteria which Ryle provides they learn, correct their errors, remember, display purpose, and act intelligently. In Ryle's chapter on "Knowing how and Knowing that", passage after passage can be applied to some of the more sophisticated of these machines. Nor do they just do what they were designed to do: they can do things which their designers did not bargain for.\* If, as Ryle says, the chessboard is among the places of the mind, the places where people work or play stupidly or intelligently, what is one to say of the chess-playing machine? After the initial programming, it can be programmed by playing against it.

I will take only two examples to show how Ryle's description of people fit machines. Both are from the section entitled "The exercise of intelligence", page 45.

"In judging that someone's performance is or is not intelligent, we have, as has been said, in a certain manner to look beyond the

\* See Norbert Wiener: "The brain and the machine" in "Dimensions of Mind" ed. Sydney Hook. (Collier)

performance itself... Our inquiry is not into causes (and a fortiori not into occult causes), but into capacities, skills, habits, liabilities and bents. We observe, for example, a soldier scoring a bull's eye. Was it luck or was it skill? If he has the skill, then he can get on or near the bull's eye again, even if the wind strengthens, the range alters and the target moves. Or if his second shot is an outer, his third, fourth and fifth shots will probably creep nearer and nearer to the bull's eye. He generally checks his breathing before pulling the trigger, as he did on this occasion; he is ready to advise his neighbour what allowances to make for refraction, wind, etc. Marksmanship is a complex of skills, and the question whether he hit the bull's eye by luck or from good marksmanship is the question whether or not he has the skills, and, if he has, whether he used them by making his shot with care, self-control, attention to the conditions and thought of his instructions...."

Apart from the soldier's holding his breath, Ryle's description of what constitutes good marksmanship applies exactly to the most advanced type of automatically controlled anti-aircraft gun in use by 1945. By all Ryle's criteria it was far more skilled and intelligent than any human marksman. A further extension of the principles employed in it dispenses with human "gunners", for information about the positions and directions of friendly planes may be fed in automatically, and correlates its operations with those of other guns miles away, i.e., it advises its neighbours what to do, and gets

advice from them.

Next let us take Ryle's account of what happens when a person argues intelligently, on page 47. Ryle's first point is that "the criteria by which his arguments are to be adjudged as cogent, clear, relevant and well organised are the same for silent as for declaimed or written ratiocinations."

"Next, although there may occur a few stages in his argument which are so trite that he can go through them by rote, much of his argument is likely never to have been constructed before. He has to meet new objections, interpret new evidence and make connections between elements in the situation which had not previously been co-ordinated. In short he has to innovate, and where he innovates, he is not operating from habit. He is not repeating hackneyed moves. That he is now thinking what he is doing is shown not only by this fact that he is operating without precedents, but also by the fact that he is ready to recast his expression of obscurely put points, on guard against ambiguities or else on the look out for chances to exploit them, taking care not to rely on easily refutable inferences, alert in meeting objections and resolute in steering the general course of his reasoning in the direction of his final goal...

"Underlying all the other features of the operations, executed by the intelligent reasoner there is the cardinal feature that he reasons logically, that is, that he avoids fallacies and produces valid proofs and inferences, pertinent to the case he is making. He observes the rule<sup>5</sup> of logic, as well as those of style, forensic

strategy, professional etiquette and the rest... to operate efficiently is not to perform two operations. It is to perform one operation in a certain manner or with a certain style or procedure, and the description of this modus operandi has to be in terms of such semi-dispositional, semi-episodic epithets as 'alert', 'careful', 'critical', 'ingenious', 'logical', etc.

"What is true of arguing intelligently is, with appropriate modifications, true of other intelligent operations..."

Machines with higher-order programming are certainly not designed to observe the rules of forensic strategy - which would include a good many things besides cogent, clear, relevant and well-organised argument - nor those of professional etiquette. But they are provided with what are called assessment rules which enable them to innovate in new situations. The sense in which they do not operate without precedents is that in which a person arguing intelligently may be said not to operate without precedents - it is rather silly to say that such a person does operate without precedents, for his skill is learned.

A person who is arguing intelligently would not, I should say, be on the look out for chances to exploit ambiguities, but Ryle obviously has in mind an advocate out to persuade his audience, rather than one who is merely alert, critical, ingenious, careful and logical, and resolute in steering the general course of his reasoning in the direction of his final goal - like the chess-playing machine. The analogy between Ryle's intelligent arguer and a machine with higher order programming breaks down simply because Ryle has included the intelligence displayed in the arts of persuasion by fair means or foul

as well as the intelligence displayed in logical well-organised reasoning. It is only the latter that the machine displays. But by these criteria, it is intelligent and is, by Ryle's definition, thinking what it is doing - not repeating hackneyed moves, but innovating.

Ryle therefore is obliged to hold that machines think. For if they think what they are doing, which by Ryle's criteria they obviously do, then of course they think. Ryle has not only provided no evidence for his statement that men are not machines but on the contrary described human behaviour in a way which suggests that they are. He plainly did not intend to do this. Nor did he intend in his account of dispositions and propensities to be giving a causal account of human behaviour. But that is what he has done.

Having argued that Ryle gives no reason for supposing that John Doe's knowing French is less a causal condition of his speaking French on various occasions than the wire being Cu<sub>2</sub> is a causal condition of good conduction on various occasions, I had better indicate briefly what knowing French means. First, it is embodied speaking subjects who know French, not things. I have already tried to say what it is to have a native language and to be a talking being (Chapter 16) and I have also tried to show how one is in a situation or milieu - organised and disposed about one - by virtue of one's bodily being in all its modes, including powers and skills. Knowing another language has to be considered in this light.

It is easy for the moderately sophisticated person to forget the peculiar character of his native language for himself: it is in it that he is at home in the world and in free communication with others about him. Let us take

an English speaker. He knows that it is one language among many others, all languages, all of equal status. But for the speaking subject his language is the language - only the others are foreign languages. He lives in it, does not construe it or interpret it or think out what the right way of saying such-and-such is, much less think about it as a language; everything is essentially expressible in it. The lived world is spoken essentially in English, for the embodied subject is possessed of English as he is possessed of sight or the power of movement - he sees, moves, speaks, and for him to speak is to speak English. Other languages are not just other, but foreign, alien, not incorporated in his being in the world as a speaker, nor part of the human milieu in which he is at home, which he can take for granted.

An English speaker in his ordinary transactions is not aware of speaking English, any more than Monsieur Jourdain was aware of talking prose. If he opens a book he does not see a lot of English words on the page, but reads the meaning. He listens to what people say (their voiced meaning), not to English words which he must construe and interpret. In another linguistic milieu, the monoglot is like a fish out of water, out of his element, or, to use another simile, like a visitor to the zoo, looking into the compound, but not frolicking with the other animals. To know another language - John Doe's knowing French - can have some resemblance to being in possession of another native language, being able to inhabit another milieu, to swim in another element, but not very commonly. John Doe's knowing English is his being an embodied talking subject, a man. His knowing French is an accomplishment, not presupposed and taken for granted in everything he thinks



and does from morning to night, as it is for Jean Dupont. John Doe is unaware of speaking English, Jean Dupont of speaking French.

Chapter 19

THE SELF AND OTHERS - I

To ask the question "what knowledge can a person get of the workings of his own mind?" says Ryle (page 168), is to invite an absurd answer about his peeps into a windowless chamber to which only he has access. An introspectionist answer. To get the behaviourist answer one must ask: "How do we establish law-like propositions about the overt and silent behaviour of persons?" And the answer is that we just observe, watch, notice, listen<sup>to</sup> and compare the behaviour of persons. Just, it may be asked, as we observe, watch etc. the behaviour of rats, volcanoes or of T.N.T.? Ryle gives no ground for thinking otherwise. Ryle is not indeed an orthodox behaviourist, for the orthodox behaviourist offers an explicitly causal account of human behaviour. But he is unorthodox only in the sense that he does not realise that explanation in terms of dispositions and propensities, as he presents it, is causal explanation.

"There is", says Ryle, "a considerable logical hazard in using the nouns 'mind' and 'minds' at all.... Where logical candour is required from us, we ought to follow the example set by novelists, biographers and diarists, who speak only of persons doing and undergoing things." (Page 168).

I am a person, according to Ryle, but I can observe that person only in much the same way as I observe any other person, except that I can listen to more of his conversations, as I am the addressee of his unspoken solilo-

quies, and notice more of his excuses, as I am never absent when they are made. (P.169). I can ask how I find out that this person has seen a joke. I can eavesdrop on his utterances and discover the frames of mind which these utterances disclose. (P.184). I can also hold sociable interchanges of conversations with him. (P.185). It should, one might think, be possible for me to eavesdrop on his sociable interchanges with himself. To think "What fun the two of them are having!" or ask, "What would they say if they knew I was listening?" or even "What would they say if they knew we were listening?" (The more the merrier.) Again, self-control is "simply the management of an ordinary person by an ordinary person, namely where John Doe, say, is taking both parts." (P.195). Ryle, I feel, must have written this before he wrote his section on make-believe and pretending.

The question is: is John Doe one person or two or more? When I observe myself, or listen ~~ing~~ to the interesting things I say, or am addressed by myself, or hear "his" excuses, or eavesdrop on "his" utterances, or discover "his" frames of mind, am I one person or two or more? If two or more, how do I tell which is which? If "person" be used univocally, we are landed with a contradiction: one person is two persons, the other is the same. If it is not used univocally, it is used equivocally.

How has logical candour been advanced or logical hazard avoided by talking of persons?

How does the contradiction or equivocation arise? It arises, I suggest, from the view that all knowledge is empirical, objective knowledge, knowledge of matters of fact, established by empirical observation, whether the thing

observed is a piece of glass, a wire, T.N.T., or a person. Since one is a person, which is at least a human body anticking about the world, whatever is to be known about it is to be known not only in the same way as what is to be known about any other person, but in essentially the same way as whatever is to be known of anything. It is of course a different sort of thing from rocks and trees and amoebae, but a thing nonetheless. Genuine knowledge of it is objective knowledge by the same token as knowledge of anything else. Not only is the self another other (which, in a sense to be explained, is true) but all others are objects. There are residual but unimportant differences in the supplies of data, and that is all.

The first or second person (whichever one prefers) of the two-person person is the ghost that haunts all theories which attempt to reduce the self to another object, the disembodied epistemological subject. This it is which observes, watches, notices, listens to, and compares the behaviour (including the discourse) of persons, among whom, or which, is one it faintly calls "myself". It is not easy to see why the ghost should call one person "myself" rather than another, or indeed why it should have more constant access to one rather than another. Apart from the curious fact that it is always tied to one person, and other persons will keep going away or failing to turn up, persons have learnt the curious trick of thinking silently instead of aloud, so that the ghost cannot always hear what they are thinking even when they are present. How does it know that they do think silently? It knows this because its own particular person, frivolously dubbed "myself", uses this trick. But in this case, though the thinking

is silent, the ghost hears and overhears and eavesdrops just as if its person were thinking aloud. It doesn't of course have eyes to see or ears to hear - the person has these - but they wouldn't be much use for silent soliloquies anyway. And since when did ghosts need these to observe, watch, notice, listen or compare?

This farce is not of my invention. I have just entered into the spirit of the thing. Only a ghost could observe, watch, eavesdrop, listen to and compare without using eyes or ears. If one takes Ryle seriously, it is impossible to see how the ghost can ever be laid. Let us assume that there is no ghost, and then watch it appearing. Let us accept Ryle's account of how dispositional questions, performance questions, and occurrence questions are decided: by watching, following, noticing, listening, etc. How do I watch, follow, notice, listen, etc.? With my eyes and ears. How do I know or find out that I watch, follow, notice, listen, etc.? Since these are occurrences and performances, the answer has to be by watching, following, noticing, listening, etc. But not with my eyes and ears. And behold the ghost. Or if there is no ghost, then I cannot find out or know this.

At a later stage, the multi-person person or the person and his Doppelgänger, is replaced by acts of the first, second, third and higher orders. An act can never be the subject in itself, but only of a further act of a higher order. The making of every entry in a diary may be chronicled in the diary except the last one.

"This, I think", says Ryle, "explains the feeling that my last year's self, or my yesterday's self, could in principle be described and accounted

for, and that your past or present self could be exhaustively described and accounted for by me, but that my today's self perpetually slips out of any hold of it that I try to take. It also explains the apparent non-parallelism between the notion of 'I' and that of 'you', without construing the elusive residuum as any kind of ultimate mystery." (P.196).

Now I do not have this feeling about my last year's or yesterday's self, but if I did, I would still, I think, find it difficult to see how Ryle can think he has explained it. Let us ask in what sense one could "in principle" exhaustively describe and account for one's past conduct. There is one well-known sense in which this has been alleged to be possible in principle, and this is precisely the sense in which it has been alleged that all our future conduct is in principle predictable: the sense proposed by La Mettrie, d'Holbach, and many subsequent mechanical determinists. There is today more than one reason why people who are inclined to hold such a view in a more sophisticated form do not hold it. The simplest reason, however, is this - that no satisfactory meaning can be attached to "in principle". What it is alleged could be done cannot be done in fact, and we cannot say how it could be done. The meaningful use of "in principle" is in cases where one has the knowledge and techniques to do something which hasn't been done, and may never be done because it is too expensive or not worth while, e.g. to produce a gas-turbine motor car. This is possible "in principle", because we know the principle. It is pointless to say we can predict in principle what we haven't the remotest notion of how to predict.

Now the point Ryle appears to be making is that while one's past in principle can be exhaustively accounted for, one's future is unpredictable,



for one datum relevant to the prediction, the prediction itself, must be left out of account. It is a higher order operation. Now again, Ryle masks from himself and the unwary reader the fact that what he is concerned with is causal explanation and prediction. That this is what he is about is made plain in the paragraph following the one I have quoted. "When people consider the problems of the Freedom of the Will and try to imagine their own careers as analogous to those of clocks and water-courses, they tend to boggle at the idea that their own immediate future is already unalterably fixed and predictable. It seems absurd to suppose that what I am just about to think, feel, or do is already preappointed...

"The solution is as before. A prediction of a deed or thought is a higher order operation, the performance of which cannot be among the things considered in making the prediction. Yet as the state of mind in which I am just before I do something may make some difference to what I do, it follows that I must overlook at least one of the data relevant to my prediction...

"The fact that my immediate future is in this way systematically elusive to me has, of course, no tendency to prove that my career is in principle unpredictable to prophets other than myself, or even that it is inexplicable to myself after the heat of the action." (P.196-197).

The difference between a causal explanation of what has happened and a prediction of what is going to happen is simply - if I may be forgiven for saying so - that what has happened has happened and what is predicted has not. There is no more difficulty essentially in the one than in the other: it depends upon the amount of relevant information and data. For this reason

many causal predictions are highly reliable, while many causal explanations of past events are highly unreliable, the relevant data being irrecoverable. The contrary is often supposed or tacitly assumed, and the question is even carelessly posed in discussions of causality and induction: How do we know that causal laws which always held good in the past will always hold good in the future? But in fact we are neither more nor less in a position to say that they always held good in the past than that they will always hold good in the future. (We simply have no doubt about it, but that is not the point.) The future we predict is the future of the present as we know it. But we don't know all there is to know. That is why we are poor prophets. For like reasons, we are worse historians. We don't know enough.

If, then, the sense in which my last year's or yesterday's self could "in principle be exhaustively described and accounted for" is the causal sense, this is equally true or untrue of my today's or tomorrow's self.

In another sense, however, we know far more about our past than about our future, and can account for a good deal of it, though not causally and not exhaustively. We know far more about what we've been and done than about what we are going to do. The reason is not far to seek: we haven't thought much about what we're going to do yet: sufficient unto the day - and so far as we have, we have been deciding what we will do if the circumstances turn out as we expect, making up our minds, forming intentions, but not making predictions except about the circumstances.

The account we give of our past is causal in so far as it concerns what happened to us or befell us - a soaking, a broken leg, the 'flu, a loss on the stock exchange, a war, whether or not we were responsible for it, that

is, whether or not it was the foreseeable consequence or effect of our own actions. But a large part of the account is not about the happenings - what one had to contend with - and not causal. It is about what one did and why one did it, why one wanted to do it or decided to do it or thought one ought to do it, for what purpose, and so on. The account is largely concerned with one's actions and the reasons for them. Since this is not a causal account, it is difficult to see in what sense anyone can suppose that it was all pre-appointed, unless he holds the doctrine of pre-destination in which everything can be accounted for, but only in eternity and only by God. It is just as difficult to see in what sense one's past was pre-appointed as to see in what sense one's future can be, unless one is trying to give a causal account. But this is not the sort of account we do, or can give, except as regards what happens to us or befalls us. But it is such an account that Ryle has in mind, and of course he gives the show away when he cites a "state of mind" as a cause of subsequent conduct. Our predicting such-and-such on this view is a mental event, an effect of antecedent events, and a contributory cause of subsequent events.

But the account which we can and do give of our past is not of this kind, nor of anyone else's past, except when we want to make excuses, disclaim responsibility, or avoid blame, and then it is usually pretty thin and weak. It is because we think we might have done otherwise than we did that we often think we've been fools, if not knaves. If we thought our past was pre-appointed, how could we? And how could we blame anyone for anything?

It is therefore not very clear what problem Ryle's "solution" is a solution to, since his premise - an unconfessed premise - that we give a

causal account of our own past life is false. The difficulty of predicting our own future causally would be only marginally greater than that of accounting for our own past causally - physiologically, neurologically, genetically, chemically, physically, economically, geographically, climatically, dietetically, etc. Only people who do not take causality seriously, as I do, could suppose otherwise. How could I even begin to give a causal account of my past? But I know why I did this and that, and why I am writing this now.

As it is a mistake to suppose that we account for our past causally, except as regards what happens to us with or without our own prior agency, so it is a mistake to suppose that we even try causally to predict our future. We can say what we intend to do - if we've thought about it - and give our reasons for doing it, say what our purpose is, and so on. But this is not to make a prediction. If we change our minds it won't be because we have previously made up our minds. We can, if we like, make general predictions - that we will eat on more than 99 per cent of our future days, that our intake of calories per diem will be above 2000 (if we are Europeans), and so on. But since we would not be able to do whatever we might want to do if some such general conditions were not fulfilled, we shall in effect take steps to see that they are fulfilled. Other questions about our future concern what we intend to do. What one predicts are the circumstances which one cannot control.

It is worth mentioning, since Ryle has raised the matter, that it is the height of absurdity to suppose that one could either predict or intend a thought: one can intend to do something but one cannot intend to think something

- that would be to think it. Why Ryle lumps thinking and doing together in this connection I cannot imagine, except that he repeatedly tries to make thinking a kind of doing. The great advantage of it is that it isn't a kind of doing - if it were we should all be dead. The point of it is in part to avoid doing foolish and disastrous things by seeing in advance where they might land us. This simple fact makes his account of theorising as just another sort of practice absurd. The main point of it is to inform practice and avoid blunders in practice.

"My process of pre-envisaging may divert the course of my ensuing behaviour in a direction and degree of which my prognosis cannot take account. One thing that I cannot prepare myself for is the next thought I am going to think." The last sentence is tautologous: to be conscious is to be conscious now, not somehow or other in the future, whether one is thinking of the past or of the future. But the point about pre-envisaging is to think of the future and what one should do. That, as I say, is why we are not all dead. My immediate future is not systematically elusive to me, as Ryle alleges. I am bent on getting this chapter finished before lunch. The sense in which it can be said to be elusive is simply the sense in which consciousness - thinking, remembering, seeing, foreseeing, imagining, etc. - is always now. But consciousness is not an object, not a series of happenings or events, it is of objects, happenings and events. We can only project or envisage the future now; the future is the future in relation to now. The sense in which the future is elusive - a grotesque sense - is that it is not now. This truism seems to underlie much of Ryle's very obscure argument. Now I have a fair idea of what others will do (and they of what

I will do). How? I understand why they should want to do it and can't imagine why they should want to do otherwise. That is why they often surprise me. But there is no question here of prophecy or causal prediction. I explain their actions in the way I explain my own. I have little idea of what the causes are in the one case or in the other. I understand or fail to understand what they are up to in terms of my own experience as a being with purposes and desires and reasons for doing things. Some of them are said to be predictable (the bores) and some unpredictable (the nuisances) but one cannot readily think of a causal explanation of their conduct. Reliable people are people one can trust, not people one can make causal predictions about. They are people who would not deceive one or let one down. The explanation of this which we give is not causal. It is that they think it wrong to deceive or that they are devoted to one or love one. It is not that certain mental or other events or states of mind occurred in their history.

Ryle confuses causal prediction with having intentions and understanding other people's intentions and conduct, and the difficulties of prediction with the perpetual presence of consciousness - the impossibility of thinking one's next thought in advance.



Chapter 20

THE SELF AND OTHERS - II

Ryle's account of self-knowledge and his account of our knowledge of others are, I believe, open to the same criticism. Though I have made my essential points about embodied experience and reflexion, I will briefly repeat one or two of them in order to show how reflexion is enmeshed with knowledge or understanding of others.

What a person can know of his own body as an object or thing in the world empirically by observation and experiment is rather less than what he can find out about another body. But his own embodied experience - seeing, touching, moving, breathing, laughing, sneezing, being elated or depressed, talking (meaning aloud) - is not an object or thing which may be empirically observed, nor the antics of an observable thing, nor is it his observation of a body; it is his being a body. Only by being a body is he in the world and only so can he observe any body or know anything about any body. There can be no objective, empirical, scientific account of the embodied subject, for it is a priori, presupposed in any such account.

But, it may be said, at least we know about others objectively, empirically, by observation, by their observed behaviour, just as we know about the brittleness of glass, the conductivity of copper wire, the explosiveness of T.N.T. This is roughly Ryle's view, his main view, though he is not very clear about it. But the answer is "no", not primarily. There are of course many facts to be known about people, such as their date of birth and other "vital statistics", which are objectively determinable. But

in accounting **for** and understanding their conduct, we do so, so far as we may, by virtue of knowing them as others. Others are not other things, other organisms, but other embodied subjects, seeing, feeling, projecting, trying to do this and that, with ends in view. If, and to the extent that, they are at all predictable that is why.

Ryle could not say a small fraction of the things he says in "The Concept of Mind" if this were not so. But he does not seem to realise it. And the reason, I suggest, is that he is the victim of an intellectualist legend much more insidious than those he attacks: the empiricist theory of knowledge whereby we know whatever we know by objective observation or reports of such, by experimentation and induction, and understand or explain whatever we understand or explain causally, scientifically. His restoration of self-knowledge to "approximate parity" with knowledge of others consists in the reduction of the self to another other and all others to objects of empirical investigation, tools, instruments, and what they are good for. There is a residual difference in the supplies of data, he says, and this reveals very clearly the type of knowledge he has in mind. It is possibly because he knows this won't do that he says such odd things about causal explanation and even goes to the extent of denying that the most evidently causal explanations are causal.

It is through our own affective consciousness of the world with all the values, apprehended as they are, there in it that we understand the conduct of others. As Hume so well understood, the springs of action lie in the passions, and we understand what others are about because we know what it's like, what they feel, the way they see the situation. Our relation to others

is not in the first place that of subject to object, of self to things, but of embodied subject or self to other embodied subjects or selves. As children even our relation to things has something of this character, and in some ways we remain animists in our relation to some things, to ships or to friendly old houses, for instance. Of course, we know they are just sticks and stones and ironmongery, but we are sad at their decay and destruction.

We see the expressions and attitudes of others and understand their meaning as we understand the meaning of their words (hearing their meaning). We see the look in their eyes, which is not to see or look at or examine an eye as a thing. We feel their eyes upon us and are affected thereby in our being as we could never be by a thing. We understand and explain their conduct, so far as we do, because we know reflexively what it is to see, hear, move, grasp, be elated or depressed, or angry or afraid or disappointed. We understand their reasons by seeing the situation they are in. And our explanations of the conduct of others in the normal way are entirely based upon this reflexive understanding. Whereas causal explanations are never final, explanations of this sort frequently are final for they answer the question "Why?" as causal explanations never do.

We are others for them, and know it when we see them look at us and when they speak to us, and we read in their expression and attitude what they feel about us. We are in their view, approved or disapproved, dull or amusing, admired or despised, loved or disliked. The other is another self, the self another other. It is in this dialectical relation that self-knowledge and knowledge of others are inseparably intertained. Reflexively

we understand how we look in the other's eyes, we are conscious of being en-soi pour-autrui. If there is an "approximate parity" it is by virtue of this dialectic. Ryle talks freely of vanity, for example, but never of this dialectic whereby we are vain and whereby we understand the vanity of others.

Ryle makes much of such things as tones of voice, whose meaning could only be understood as the expression of another embodied subject and not as a mere sound. And in his treatment of avowals and unstudied utterances, surely a most promising tack, he in effect misses the essential point by making all selves others and only others, so that we hear our own unstudied utterances exactly in the same way as we hear others' unstudied utterances, which is to say "we" do not utter, do not say, do not mean aloud. "We" know we are depressed or elated by hearing our own words, not by being depressed or elated, not reflexively, but empirically by observation of our curious behaviour. "We", as I have said, in this context can only be the ghost, the disembodied epistemological subject.

For reasons I have expounded before, others may know our mood or feeling before we do, but our words or tone are not sui generis and not mere happenings or events, they are our meaning aloud, our expression. Our explicit avowals of feelings, moods and emotions are already reflexive and express our reflexive awareness. Of course Ryle knows this. How could anyone discuss "catching oneself beginning to dream" without knowing it? But Ryle is so concerned to make knowledge of the self and others objective and matter of fact, to get rid in effect of selves and subjects, that he makes us all indeed others, but not selves, and this is to make all of us, all so-called others, things. The only explanation of the behaviour of things is a causal

explanation. Apart from this, how should the so-called problem of predicting one's own future behaviour or indeed one's own thoughts ever arise? Surely no one who has not been bamboozled by pseudo-science ever tries to do this: what he tries to predict is the circumstances he will have to contend with: in making up his mind what to do he is not predicting what he will do, but deciding what he had better do.

Chapter 21

LOGICAL GRAMMAR AND REFLEXION

Ryle is engaged, and heavily engaged, in reflexive description at various points throughout the book. But he does not or will not recognise it, nor pursue it systematically. His account of what he is doing is that he is trying to "show why certain sorts of operations with the concepts of mental powers and processes are breaches of logical rules." (P.8). One might not guess from his account of what he is doing that the "logical rules" or the "logical grammar" of the words he discusses are discussions of what we embodied subjects mean by what we say. One might suppose that the logical rules and grammar of the language as he professes to discuss them were matters for the grammarian, the philologist, and the lexicographer, and though Ryle is rightly convinced that he is doing something different from any of them, he never, never, explains what it is, and where the difference lies.\*

It is in one of his best chapters "Sensation and Observation", that he says "there is something seriously amiss with the discussions occupying this chapter. I have talked as if we know how to use the concept or concepts of sensation; I have spoken with almost perfunctory regret of our lack of 'neat' sensation words; and I have glibly spoken of auditory and visual sensations. But I am sure that none of this will do." (P.240).

Ryle in fact uses the ambiguous vocabulary of sensations but recognises that it is a semi-psychological, semi-physiological term, the employment of

\* cf. *La Philosophie Analytique*. P.100



which is allied with certain pseudo-scientific, Cartesian theories, and he confesses that he does not know the "right idioms" in which to discuss these matters. Even in the process of using the vocabulary and falling into some of the errors, he succeeds in seeing that it won't do. This story about not knowing "the right idioms", however, as if they were mysteriously laid up in heaven beyond the reach even of a highly educated man, is somewhat absurd. It illustrates the tendency to treat the language as sui generis, as if it had some existence independent of those who speak it, as if its meanings and idioms were not our meanings and idioms, and as if we were stumped if we could not find one ready-made.

"We do not", he says, "and cannot describe haystacks in terms of this and that set of sensations. We describe our sensations by certain sorts of references to observers and things like haystacks." (P.203). The sensations Ryle is talking about are not, for example, the pricking of the hay when one leans against a haystack. But what other sensations are there? He later remarks (P.208) that sensations do not have sizes, shapes, positions, temperatures, colours or smells. This is not quite true of bodily sensations - a pain in the toe is in the toe and in this sense has position, and similarly some pains are in a small area and some spread, e.g., all up and down the leg. But the question is: what sensations can we describe and what sensations are there, apart from bodily sensations? It is true of bodily sensations that one does not and cannot observe them, as Ryle points out, though one can attend to them, for example, to the feel of one's collar on the back of the neck. But Ryle insists: "To describe someone as finding a thistle is to say something about his having visual, tactual or auditory

sensations, but it is to say more than that. Similarly to describe someone as trying to make out whether what he sees is a chaffinch or a robin, or a stick or a shadow, a fly on the window or a mote in his eye, is to say something about his visual sensations, but it is to say more than that." (P.224).

It is surely not to say that at all. To try to make out what one sees is to try to make out what it is. What is the point of calling the indeterminate "it" a sensation? But what else could one be calling a sensation? And what could one be saying about it? The same point arises at the end of his good description of the experience of recognising a tune and listening to a familiar tune. Ryle says that when we hear a tune we are having auditory sensations, but more than that. But what could they be but the notes of the tune we hear? And why call them sensations? There is always a distinction to be made between the "this" and the "such", but "this" is always "such-and-such", the universal is in re, the tune we hear - for example, "Lilliburlero", though we may not know the name - is this tune now. To apprehend the ὅλη as such, as ὅλη, would be to apprehend it as the form of itself, to eliminate the "such", the universal.

Now it is possible that what Ryle is after is the various aspects of things, the fact that a thing is never seen in its entirety all at once, that it must be explored, gone round, discovered and learned. "Sensations" would refer to visible parts of the haystack as distinct from the other side or the inside. But if this is the point, it is not made clear, and the term "sensation" merely leads to confusion.

On P.206, Ryle says: "We have seen that observing entails having sen-

sations; a man could not be described as watching a robin who had not got a single glimpse of it, or as smelling cheese who had not caught a whiff. (I am pretending, what is not true, that words like 'glimpse' and 'whiff' stand for sensations...)" He goes on to show the absurdity of supposing that we observe the glimpse. But why should he pretend that glimpses are sensations? To catch a glimpse of a robin is to see a robin for a brief moment before it disappears from view. To watch a robin is not to be catching glimpses of it unless it is popping into and out of view. But the glimpsing or catching glimpses is the seeing. The whiff on the other hand is not the smelling but what is smelt. Smells are smelt with the nose, not in the nose, but in the air, in the room. To get a whiff of cheese is to smell briefly the smell of cheese, coming, for example, from the grocer's door as one passes. (If smells were in the nose, they would not come from any direction: other animals of course find their prey by smell or take flight from their enemies in the direction away from the smell). There is no more reason to call smells or whiffs sensations than to call the brown of the table top a sensation.

At the end of the chapter, where he is discussing hurts and itches, Ryle says: "Hurts and itches cannot, for instance, be distinct or indistinct, clear or unclear. Whereas finding something out by sight or touch is an achievement, 'I itch terribly' does not report an achievement, or describe anything ascertained. I do not know what more is to be said about the logical grammar of such words, save that there is much more to be said." (P.244).

What is unsatisfactory? What won't do? What more is to be said?

Ryle supposes that his remaining perplexities concern the right idioms and

the logical grammar of the language. But isn't it absurd to suppose that he doesn't know the idioms and the logical grammar? If he doesn't, who does? If no one does, then the language is indeed not our language, but as it were laid up in heaven, and only God knows all the right idioms, only some of which are vouchsafed to our limited understanding. The genuine perplexity concerns the nature of sense-experience; there is of course a difficulty in saying precisely and unambiguously what we mean, but the primary difficulty is that of reflexive analysis of our experience. And a large part of Ryle's book consists of such analysis - never pushed very far, but unquestionably that sort of analysis, and his linguistic analyses themselves depend for understanding on the reflexive prise de conscience of the reader. The appeal is to the reader's experience. The reader understands him and agrees or disagrees by virtue of his own embodied being, whereby he knows what it is to see, hear, think, talk, feel, have pains and tickles, etc., in a variety of situations, and by being in possession of a language in which he means, voices and expresses his meaning, and hears with his ears others' meanings.

Why does Ryle not recognise this? Why does he repeatedly talk as if, on the one hand, the logical grammar of the language were sui generis, and on the other, as if whatever could be truly said of people and their conduct, must be empirically, objectively true or false, as it is true to say of a piece of wax that it is malleable, melts on heating and changes colour, and that one finds this out experimentally, inductively, by observation?

One reason is, of course, his polemical purpose of attacking dualist doctrines of mind and body, and in particular the notion of a mind as a place

where things secretly happen. He identifies the contrary view chiefly with introspection, on which he launches a very effective attack, but an attack which consists essentially of asking the reader: do you have such experiences as you ought to have, if what introspectionists say is true? This is the point, not the diversity of idioms and metaphors, live and dead, in which we talk about our experience. Any such appeal is an appeal to our reflexive awareness. And this is the appeal which must be made in the case of sensations. For example, when you see a haystack what sensations do you have and where? There is no difficulty in knowing how to talk, apart from the difficulty of reflexive analysis. It is reflexive analysis that can be difficult.

For example, if one comes out of a cool dark room into brilliant hot sunshine, how is the glare experienced? One sees the glaring colour of things, but also one cannot bear it - it hurts the eyes, one has to screw them up, and they water. One is having sensations in the eyes as well as seeing the glare of the colours, but the glare is not the discomfort in the eye; it is what hurts them. (In other conditions what one sees isn't producing any feeling in the eye). The hurt subsides with the glare that hurts; from being glaring the colours become brilliant. One can look at them now. One does not look at the glare. On the contrary. If one asks if glare is a sensation, one won't get an illuminating answer, because if anything this is a matter of linguistic legislation - one must just say what reflexion reveals. How why on earth should our experience of glare be like, much less exactly like, any other experience or described in a sensation vocabulary? It is of course analogous to other experiences.

For example, one feels the hot, hard, metal pot-handle as one sees the colours of the flowers, but it is too hot to take hold of, just as the colours are too glaring to look at. It burns; the colours glare.

But to try to find a proper sensation vocabulary is futile. If we thought we had found one, it would merely stop us from saying half the things we want to say\*, and still worse lead us into the pitfall of the old sensationalist doctrine which has to insist that we don't experience what we think, or fondly imagine, we experience. The hankering for a "neat vocabulary" in the interests of logical grammar is fortunately doomed to disappointment. Language never fails us if we know what we want to say. One only lacks words when one hasn't yet got anything to say. One can go on correcting, adjusting, varying the expression, but this, as Ryle in effect says, is not something independent of thinking the matter out. There is no problems of the idioms as such; if there were "right idioms" which Ryle didn't know, this would mean simply that someone had thought the matter out before, but Ryle hadn't read what he had to say. Idioms are not sui generis. There was a first time for every idiom and metaphor in the language - someone invented it, expressed his meaning that way, and his meaning was his thinking.

Ryle's discussion of consciousness is a witty survey of some of the many senses the word has in English. But the only philosophical point of this would be to guard against misunderstanding in saying what one had to say about consciousness, in whatever sense of the word one wanted to say something about it. Otherwise one is talking about the peculiar idioms of the English language, in much the same way as Otto Jespersen and other philologists. It has no

\* This is why some North American psychologists are incapable of simple articulate utterance.



relevance to the interesting and illuminating things Sartre, for example, has to say about the imaging consciousness in "L'Imaginaire". Ryle's failure to realise that philosophical perplexity is not a matter of not knowing the right idioms or of not having got them sorted out - as if they were all there, somewhere, if one could find them, ready-made - accounts for his failure to consider reflexive awareness or consciousness on which all descriptions of experience depend and to which he constantly appeals.

He takes what is "apt to be inadequately covered by the umbrella-title 'self-consciousness'" to be higher order acts of various sorts, of which reviews of books, criticism of actions, and so on are the types. But reflexion is not a higher order act of this kind, nor is there any sort of public or private performance to be the object of it. It is not observation, and it has no object analogous to the book which is criticised or the scoring of the goal which is praised. The object is the object of experience in the ordinary sense - the tree that one sees, for instance. An experience becomes reflexive: reflexion is the explicitation of what is implicit in it, the prise de conscience, not the observation of another object. There is nothing obscure or occult about it. Without it, no one could appeal to anyone else's experience; novels would be incomprehensible, and the moralists' aperçus on the human heart could never be found penetrating.

No experience need become reflexive, though many experiences do. Reflexive analysis is always possible. To be reflexively aware of seeing one must be seeing. To be reflexively aware of writing one must be writing. Most of the time one isn't reflexively aware of writing. But one can be. If one asks what is the difference between writing oneself, seeing the pen

and paper, and seeing someone else writing, the answer is given by reflexion. For example, as one writes one does not watch to see what letter or word comes next, nor does one even watch the tip of the pen forming the letters; one writes the word as a whole in cursive, not as a series of letters, but one may notice when one hasn't formed a letter properly or when one has misspelt a word. In looking at what someone else is writing, one watches the letters appearing and guesses from the context and the beginning of the word what the word will be. Reflexive analysis here merely explicitates a difference which everyone is more or less aware of. There is of course an analogy with the difference between saying something and hearing someone else say something. (As I have remarked earlier, one might suppose from what Ryle says that it was merely a matter of the different mouths the sounds came out of and the position of various pairs of ears in relation to these mouths.)

Reflexion may be retrospective and is presupposed in memory of having seen and heard and done such-and-such. To remember the name of the capital of Colombia when asked does not involve reflexion - but to "know" that one knows it and try to remember it, or to "know" that one doesn't, are reflexive, and so of course is remembering having seen it mentioned in the newspaper yesterday, whether or not one also remembers the name. The reflexive description and analysis of the experience of "knowing one knows but not being able to recall" is a matter of some difficulty, but without reflexive awareness - not empirical observation - no one would even know what I was talking about when I mention it. According to Ryle's official account we could only know this by hearing another person - whether or not it happened to be our-

self - saying "Oh, I know it but it's slipped my memory," by overhearing his unstudied utterances. And according to Ryle, he wouldn't know it since he couldn't say it.

When one asks what the difference is between a happening, event or occurrence, and an action or doing, or what the difference is between something moving, or a movement taking place, and a movement that one makes, if people are at a loss it is not because they doubt the difference or because the difference is obscure, but because it is already familiar reflexively and is already expressed in the very words in which the question is asked. Everyone knows the difference between something happening to him and his doing something; everyone has experienced the effects of external agencies and everyone is a doer with desires and ends in view which he sets about achieving. It is upon this common reflexive understanding that the analysis of experience, including the analysis of meaning, is founded. That Ryle's analysis of concepts is founded upon it and presupposes it is readily shown.

Take, for example, his statement: "Hurts and itches cannot, for instance, be distinct or indistinct, clear or unclear." They can be mild or dull, or severe or acute. How do we assent to, or dissent from, this? By thinking of hurts and itches, for we know what various sorts of hurts and itches are like reflexively, what it is to have a hurt or an itch, as we know what it is like to see something clearly, to make it out, and to see something indistinctly, for example in a bad light. To think of, in such cases, is to imagine having an itch, seeing a haystack through a fog, etc. The logical grammar of the words could only be understood by one who could be hurt or have an itch, and who was in possession of a language to express or describe these

experiences.

But if one wants to dissent from Ryle's analysis of the logical grammar of these words it is easy to do so. All one has to do is to think of a kind of hurt or itch of which the words "distinct" or "indistinct" could be used, for language is essentially to be exploited. Is a fierce itch a hurt? Is an agonising burning itch, with fever, from sunburn, a hurt? Is it distinctly an itch or distinctly a hurt? Could one not call the acute but generalised discomfort of a fever when one wakes up, indistinct? That is surely why one wonders what it is one feels: one is distressed, but how and where? To pursue the sort of questions which Ryle raises, it is of little use to examine the English language which all we embodied English-speaking subjects know, one must think of various experiences. It worries Ryle that there is no neat sensation vocabulary. I suspect that underlying this worry is the desire for "unambiguous" words. But words are neither ambiguous nor unambiguous, only what people mean.

Let us now look at Ryle's account of mental images and pictures in the mind's eye, which he has himself recognised to be akin in some respects to Sartre's reflexive analysis. (*La Philosophie Analytique*, P.81). It is one of his best chapters because he does so much more than he professes to be doing; it fails only because he does not do enough of it. His refusal to pursue reflexive analysis or to concern himself with any kind of meaning but the meaning, sense or nonsense, of expressions,\* accounts for his failure to say some of the most obvious and central things about imagination. The result of failure to pursue the analysis of this central function of conscious-

\* cf. *La Philosophie Analytique*, P.97.

ness - which Hume essentially recognised - is an extreme ambiguity in some of the things he does say. This ambiguity, as I shall show, actually results from his pre-occupation with words, when he ought to be analysing experience. It isn't the fault of the words!

"I want to show," he says, "that the concept of picturing, visualising, or 'seeing' is a proper and useful concept, but that its use does not entail the existence of pictures which we contemplate or the existence of a gallery in which such pictures are ephemerally suspended. Roughly, imaging occurs, but images are not seen... A person picturing his nursery... is not being a spectator of a resemblance of his nursery, but he is resembling a spectator of his nursery." (Concept of Mind, P.247-248).

This is fine for a start, but only for a start: images are not pictures, nor resemblances, not representations, and they cannot be seen or looked at. But for the same reason a person imagining his nursery is not resembling a spectator of his nursery. A spectator of the nursery would be in it and see it and could examine all the details of it, discovering them there. For the same reason that an image is not, and cannot be, a resemblance of a nursery, a person imagining a nursery is not, and cannot be, a resemblance of a spectator of the nursery. Ryle is led, one might think quite innocently and harmlessly, into saying that he does resemble a spectator of the nursery, because he fails to make the simple, essential point about the object of the image or imagining, and the object of the seeing - it is the same object: the nursery. But imaging is not seeing. The person picturing his nursery is not in it and does not see it. But it is his nursery he is picturing. The reason why he is precisely not resembling a spectator is that a spectator

is spectating, seeing.

An image is an imaging, a consciousness of, a mode of intending or meaning an object. As Sartre says: When I imagine my friend Peter, it is Peter I am imagining; when I have an image of Peter, my image is of Peter. This is tautologous, even if one has no idea where Peter at present is, or of what he is doing. Who or what is Peter? He is the man I mean. To image or imagine him is to mean or intend that very man in person. An old man picturing his nursery would mean or intend that very nursery in the house where he was born, then and there, three score years and ten ago, even if it were long since demolished and even if he knew it was long since demolished.

The suggestion that he is resembling a spectator of his nursery is closely connected with Ryle's tendency to regard imaging and imagining as a kind of make-believe (which of course depends upon imagining) or pretending, and his failure to realise that to think of or remember, for example, the splendid proportions of St. Paul's is to imagine St. Paul's, and that whenever one thinks of any actual place or person or thing in the world and remembers what he or she or it was like, one is imagining that place or person or thing. But not pretending or making-believe or fancying that. One can also imagine what one doesn't remember or believe to exist or to have existed. The point of Hume's natural belief is to make the distinction - the objects of natural belief are what we should say there is, or was, really in the world, not figments of the imagination, such as dragons and centaurs or Hamlet.

What Hume tries to account for by his doctrine of natural belief, whereby



there is for us what we call a real world, Sartre analyses in terms of the way the imaging consciousness posits its object. The object can be posited in four ways - as non-existent, as absent, as existing elsewhere, or as "neutral", (in which case the object is not posited as existent.) "These positional acts," says Sartre, "are not added to the image once it is constituted: the positional act is constitutive of the imaging consciousness. Any other theory, in fact, besides being contrary to the data of reflexion, lands us again in the illusion of immanence." (L'Imaginaire, P.24).

"When I fancy I am hearing a very loud noise," says Ryle, "I am not really hearing either a loud or a faint noise: I am not having a mild auditory sensation, as I am not having an auditory sensation at all, though I am fancying that I am having an intense one. An imagined shriek is not ear-splitting, nor yet is it a soothing murmur, and an imagined shriek is neither louder nor fainter than a heard murmur. It neither drowns it nor is drowned by it." (P.250).

What Ryle means is plainly this: we know what it is to hear an ear-splitting shriek, but we can here and now imagine one, unruffled, unshaken, and in perfect composure, for we are not now hearing it. But it is confusing to say "when I fancy I am hearing". To fancy one hears a shriek, or to fancy one heard the door-bell, is to think that one did hear it, but not to be sure that it was a shriek or the door-bell, or whether indeed one heard anything. To imagine a very loud noise is not to fancy or imagine one is hearing it now. Similarly to imagine one sees a man crouching at the side of a road on a dark night, when it is only a bush, is simply to

see the bush as a man crouching, to take it for a man: not to imagine either a bush or a man, but to see what is in fact a bush as a man, as one might take an attendant at Madame Tussaud's for one of the exhibits and say: "I fancied I was seeing one of the waxworks." To imagine is not to fancy that, or imagine that in this sense, nor to fancy that one sees or hears, or that one is having an intense auditory sensation (whatever that would be.) One knows perfectly well one is not seeing or hearing; in seeing and hearing the object is posited as present and now existent; in imaging the object is posited as not existent, or not here, or existing elsewhere or "neutral" - the positional act is in every case negative.

There is another sense, however, in which we imagine that such-and-such is the case, the sense in which we envisage a situation and imagine people we know in it. For example, one can try to imagine what an interview will be like and what sort of questions will be asked, or one can try to imagine how a friend in some situation is bearing up. One does not suppose for a moment that one is now there; one is not hallucinating or dreaming, though imagining may be very vivid. As I shall argue presently, vividness is a matter of affectivity: feelings and emotions, the states of the embodied subject correlative to the value predicates of the object, can be as strong, lively, or "real" in the absence as in the presence of the object. It is this which leads people to say: "It's as if I were there", or "I can just see it!"

Ryle goes on making this confusion, or at least failing to make the distinction, between two senses of "imagining that" and of course his use of the word "fancy" does not help. (This is connected with his tendency to

assimilate imagining to make-believe). It leads him to say that to have "a mental picture of Helvellyn" is "to imagine that we see Helvellyn in front of our noses." To imagine here in Edinburgh, Helvellyn there in Wales is not to imagine Helvellyn in front of this nose here in Edinburgh. It is to imagine oneself (nose and all) in Wales looking at Helvellyn: to imagine oneself in a situation in which one is not, for one is imagining here, not there, and one's nose is here, not there.

There is a further, and important point, which is worth making in this connection: perceiving and imagining may alternate but cannot fuse or combine. (One is inclined to say they can in the case of the bush seen as a crouching footpad on the dark road, because again the fear and apprehension are as strong and lively as if it were a footpad. But in fact one sees something in the shape of a man, and this case is entirely assimilable to other mistakes of perception.) If one imagines a friend sitting, talking and laughing in the chair across this present room, to imagine him in the chair one must imagine the chair and all, and must cease to see it. For to see the chair is to see the backrest and seat of the chair, which one could not see if he were in it. Or is "he" transparent? Is one imagining him as transparent or as his solid, opaque self?

Let us return to the imagined shriek. Ryle has missed an essential point about this ear-splitting shriek. It is that if one imagines an ear-splitting shriek, it is an ear-splitting shriek one is imagining. To say an imagined shriek is not ear-splitting is entirely misleading. The point is simply that one is not hearing it, not that it is not ear-splitting, nor that it is not a shriek. One will never get this kind of point through

the study of logical grammar - one has to imagine ear-splitting shrieks.

If I now imagine the ear-splitting shriek that the secretary let out when she saw the mouse, it is that very ear-splitting shriek I imagine - I mean that very shriek, the same shriek, which I then heard but now imagine.

There are not two shrieks, one heard and one imagined, but one, just as there is one girl who let out the shriek, whether seen and heard or imagined.

After saying an imagined shriek is neither ear-splitting nor a soothing murmur, Ryle continues: "Similarly, there are not two species of murderers, those who murder people, and those who act the parts of murderers on the stage; for these last are not murderers at all... As mock-murders are not murders, so imagined sights and sounds are not sights and sounds. They are not, therefore, dim sights, or faint sounds. And they are not private sights or sounds either. There is no answer to the spurious question, 'Where have you deposited the victim of your mock-murder?' since there was no victim. There is no answer to the spurious question, 'Where do the objects reside that we fancy we see?' since there are no such objects." (Concept of Mind, P.250-251).

Again Ryle's use of the expression "fancy we see" confuses the issue. I take him to mean "imagine". Now there is a straight and simple answer to many questions of the kind: where is the object I am imagining? If I am imagining St. Paul's, the answer is: in the City of London, not far from the Bank, etc. That's where, because I mean that very pile in that very place, and posit it, as Sartre would say, as there existing. Again, when I recall in imagination my conversation with someone yesterday, what he said, and how he said it, the expression on his face, his laugh, his tone

of voice, it is these I am now imagining. If these be called sights and sounds, I saw and heard them yesterday, and today I am recalling them in imagination, imagining them, the same sights and sounds. It is quite false that the imagined sights and sounds are not sights and sounds - they are the same sights and sounds I saw and heard. They are not now occurring and do not now "reside" anywhere - they are past. But it is them I remember and imagine now, the same ones I then saw and heard. I do not now fancy I see and hear them now, I now remember seeing and hearing them then. There is no analogy of the sounds and sights I now imagine with mock-murders. (Stage murders, performances of fictions, imitations, mimicry demand a separate analysis, and so do portraits and caricatures or indeed faces in the fire: the imaging consciousness is essential in all of these as Sartre has shown.) (L'imaginaire, II, La famille de l'image. P.30-76)

In his discussion of the question, "How can a person seem to hear a tune running in his head unless there is a tune to hear?" (Page, 251), Ryle is again ambiguous. It is impossible to say whether by "seeming to hear a tune" he means "having a tune in one's head" or "thinking one does hear a tune".

"We already know", he says, "and have known since childhood, in what situations to describe people as imagining that they see or hear or do things. The problem, so far as it is one, is to construe these descriptions without falling back into the idioms in which we talk of seeing horse-races, hearing concerts, and committing murders. It is into these idioms that we fall back the moment we say that to fancy one sees a dragon is to see a real dragon-phantasm, or that to pretend to commit a murder is to commit a real mock-murder, or that to seem to hear a tune is to hear a real mental tune.

To adopt such linguistic practices is to try to convert into species-concepts concepts which are designed, anyhow partly, to act as factual disclaimers... Similarly a person who 'sees Helvellyn in his mind's eye' is not seeing either the mountain, or a likeness of the mountain..."

Apart from Ryle's ambiguity of expression, which results from the refusal to analyse different experiences, unlike things are here yoked by violence together: tunes and dragons and Helvellyn. Now if one imagines Helvellyn, it is that very mountain one imagines, a real mountain. The factual disclaimer, if it can be called that, is that it is in Wales and not here in Edinburgh: it is posited as existing elsewhere, in Sartre's terms. Dragons on the other hand are posited as non-existent. There are no dragons. They are what are called fictions or purely imaginary. Since "dragon" does not mean the same as "gryphon" or "centaur", it is convenient to regard them as universals in verbo but not in re. Everyone knows what the word "dragon" means, but there are no instances. What is represented in pictures of St. George and the dragon is what an instance would look like if there were an instance, and that is also what one imagines when one imagines a dragon. But there is no instance.

Tunes or symphonies or poems have this in common that they are not just real things in the world in the sense in which Helvellyn is. They are meant identities, but ideal, that is to say they are universals. To discuss Brahms's Fourth Symphony as such is to discuss the universal, the work itself. To discuss the performance of it last night is to discuss a good or bad instance of it, how well the universal was realised. Tunes and symphonies are instantiated every time they are played. (But dragons are not



tiated every time they are portrayed: if they were instantiated they would be instantiated as animals, not as pictures.) It does not much matter in what terms one makes these distinctions, so long as one makes them.

In hearing a symphony or a movement of a symphony, as in all sense experience, one hears the universal in re. If one has heard it before, it is the very same symphony one hears again, in re both times, then and now. A point which Ryle obscures is that the tune "Lilliburlero", for example, is ideal, a universal, but the mountain Helvellyn is not ideal, not a universal, but a real mountain. A performance of "Lilliburlero" is heard in the world in a place, as Helvellyn is seen in a place, but the Helvellyn one sees isn't a performance or an instance of Helvellyn. It is Helvellyn itself. When one imagines Helvellyn it is that mountain there in Wales now one is imagining. Similarly if one recalls in imagination a performance of a piece it is that very performance one is imagining. But to have a tune running in one's head, or to go over a tune in one's head or hum it aloud, is not to imagine any performance, much less to fancy one is hearing it. It is to think of, mean, intend, the tune itself, the universal.

Similarly, in the case of a poem. In the poem the value is in the words and lines themselves, not in what they are about, or not mainly in what they are about. Poetry is in this like, but not quite like music, for music as such is not about anything. To recall a poem or a piece of music is to recall an affective essence, and its raison d'être, so to speak, is nothing but this value or affective essence. That is why the tune or

poem is not posited as existing elsewhere or as non-existent, and is not posited in Sartre's sense at all. One can have the very essence "in one's head" and find a performance by contrast a revelation or a bitter disappointment.

It is in this respect that tunes are like people one knows, who in other respects, though smaller and mobile, are like Helvellyn in being bits of stuff in the world. At a pinch one can discuss "seeing Helvellyn in the mind's eye" without bringing in affectivity and value - though to discuss imagining it vividly, one must - but one cannot discuss imagining one's sweetheart or mama without doing so, and one cannot discuss repeating a poem or going over a piece of music to oneself without doing so. It is affectivity which makes one say "It's as if I were there", or "I can hear it now" or "I can just see the darling girl", when one knows very well it isn't and one can't. That indeed is why one is longing or wishing one could.

Tunes are noble, sad, grand, gay, jaunty, wistful, melting, insinuating, etc. As one listens one is wrapt, sat, jaunty, gay, melted, entranced, etc. The distinction between hearing or seeing and imagining has no parallel in the domain of affectivity and value. This is not to say one feels the same in the presence and in the absence of a person. On the contrary, But feelings are always present feelings here and now. One may enjoy a work far more in one's head, so to speak, than in the concert hall - though it is irritating that there are nearly always bits one can't quite remember. There is no distinction between the emotions one is having and the emotions one is imagining having, as there is a distinction between hearing and

"auralising" (cf. visualising) a tune, or between having a dear person with one and imagining him in his absence. Emotions, feelings, affectivity are equally "real" or "unreal" in either case, though to some extent of course they are different feelings - for instance, one doesn't long for someone who is present, only for someone who is absent. But when one imagines a person or a place of which one is fond, and especially if one imagines being there with him, it is like being there in the sense that one has actual feelings about it and they are not imagined feelings. Perhaps, but only perhaps, this is what Ryle is referring to sometimes when he identifies imagining something with fancying one sees it. To imagine anything vividly is to be strongly affected. To imagine its charm, grace, and other value predicates. It is not to remember the details of it - one can remember the expression or physiognomy of a face vividly without for example being able to remember the colour of the eyes or other details. This is not to make-believe any more than to recite a poem to oneself or go over a tune in one's head is to make-believe. One isn't pretending anything is the case which isn't the case.

Now I do not claim to have done more than make a few points about imagination. My purpose is to show the inadequacy of Ryle's approach and to demonstrate <sup>the</sup> limitations of the analysis of logical grammar. Ryle's chapters on emotion and imagination are almost completely unconnected, because he did not think that the analysis of actual experience is his, or perhaps any philosopher's, business. But he cannot avoid appealing to experience, which is to appeal to the reflexive consciousness, and giving reflexive descriptions.

At the Colloque de Royaumont on analytic philosophy in 1961, Ryle made some interesting comments on his treatment of imagination. "I was, I think, on the right track," he says, "in assimilating the notion of imagining, for example to evoke in an image, to the much more general notion of pretending, of which I understood quite clearly other kinds such as the notions of playing and simulating. But when I came to consider imagining as a 'pretending to see'\*, I felt a conceptual uneasiness, which is always a sure sign that something has gone wrong. Part of this uneasiness came from the fact that when I had previously treated visual perception proper, I got stuck over the relation between the concept of seeing, let us say, trees and stars, and that of having an optical sensory impression. This shows how conceptual investigations can't be enclosed in watertight compartments. During the long period when I was floundering, I was, however, guided by an idea which I still think is capital in the concept of imagining. It is this. A person can hear at a concert a piece he does not know, so that he at once tries to learn how the melody goes, but a person who goes over the tune in his head, must have already learned, and not have forgotten, how the tune goes: furthermore, not only must he already know how the tune goes, but he must at this instant be using this knowledge; he must be in fact thinking how the tune goes; he must be thinking how it goes, without its being played and without humming it. He must think how it goes, in its absence." (La Philosophie Analytique, P.31-32).

Would Ryle say this of a poem? In what sense could a poem be absent? Ryle, who has pointed out that one may think aloud or think silently and that there is no great difference except that aloud one communicates one's

\* "Faire semblant de voir": this may be "fancying one sees".  
The text is in French.

thought to other people, might have realised that there is similarly no great difference between going over a tune in one's head and humming it, or between reciting a poem silently and aloud. They aren't things that exist in the world, like Melvellyn, though they are performed - performances take place and are heard. Only a performance could be absent or "ago" - not the tune itself: if one has got it in one's head, one has got it.

"But what stopped me," Ryle goes on, "was that I didn't know what more to say on this notion of thinking how the tune goes. For a man can say, even with an air of surprise, 'It was almost as if I really heard the notes'. The kind of 'thinking' in which he was engaged was so lively, and had such a degree of resemblance with the real thing (*avec la vie*), that it led him to compare the notes which he had simply thought to heard notes, with however this crucial difference that the notes in thought were only notes in thought, but were not heard at all. He did not hear a note; but he "heard" them vividly. He was, without hearing them, so alert (*éveillé*) to the sound they would have had if he had heard them, that it was almost as if they had sounded in his ears. It is because of this concept of quasi-sensory vivacity of auditorily imagined notes, among other things, that I was sure of not having succeeded in finding my way."

Hume was concerned with this very problem, and the reason or one of the reasons it seems to me, why he wanted to distinguish impressions and ideas simply in terms of force and vivacity was that he regarded the passions as impressions, and in the case of the passions the distinction by force and

~~"The sentiment is not a distinct impression, but a distinct idea."~~  
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vivacity is plausible. He says in Book II, that an idea of a passion can be enlivened into the passion itself, and of course his mechanism of sympathy, whereby we know what others feel, depends upon this. Now whereas it is not true that to imagine something vividly is to see it, and his distinction in terms of force and vivacity won't work there, it works very well as regards the passions. To imagine an infuriating situation that arose yesterday is actually to be angry all over again, not just to remember one was angry. That is why it all comes back so vividly before one. One remembers everyone and everything with all the value predicates. To remember the situation and remember being angry is just to have the "idea of the passion"; but it is easy for the idea to be enlivened into the passion itself, i.e., one can be quite furious again here and now. The trouble is that Hume also wants the "idea of the passion" to serve in effect as the meaning of the word, for example, the meaning of the word "anger". As a fainter copy of the passion itself, the idea of anger isn't what someone writing a chapter on anger has in mind as he writes - if he did, he would be, ever so slightly, angry. He knows the meaning of "anger", has the concept and is using it, but he isn't angry at all.

The explanation of the "quasi-sensory vivacity" of the remembered tune, the "auditorily imagined notes", lies in the affective state of the embodied subject, his delight in the tune - the correlate of its gaiety or charm or other value predicate. Ryle's chapter on the emotions, as I have said, is entirely unrelated to his chapter on the imagination. Hume with his more genial and capacious conception of the philosopher's business made the essential connection.